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ABSTRACT

This hearing, which occurred at New Mexico Technical Vocational Institute, Albuquerque, New Mexico, heard from state and local officials about what was working and not working in education. Included are statements on dropout prevention by Congressional representatives and by the Deputy Director of the New Mexico Children, Youth, and Families Department Early Care Prevention and Intervention Division; the Deputy Director of the Emmanuel Baptist Child Development Center and Academy, Farmington, New Mexico; the Director of the Albuquerque Partnership, Albuquerque, New Mexico; the Dean of the College of Education, University of New Mexico; the President of Youth Development, Incorporated, Albuquerque, New Mexico; the Director of the Center for Teacher Education, University of New Mexico; the Associate Superintendent of Albuquerque Public Schools, New Mexico; the President of Roger Cox and Associates, Albuquerque, New Mexico; an educational consultant from Albuquerque, New Mexico; a Danforth Fellow at the University of New Mexico Sierra Alternative Program; a student at the Sierra Alternative Program; and a mother from Albuquerque, New Mexico. Statements, letters, and presentations are appended. (SM)

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ED 464 165

DROPOUT PREVENTION

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND
THE WORKFORCE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED SIXTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

HEARING HELD IN ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO, JANUARY 24, 2000

Serial No. 106–86

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FIELD HEARING ON DROPOUT PREVENTION

Monday, January 24, 2000

House of Representatives

Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

Committee on Education and the Workforce

Washington, D.C.

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to call, at New Mexico Technical Vocational Institute (TVI), Smith Brasher Hall, 717 University Boulevard, NE, Albuquerque, New Mexico. Hon. Pete Hoekstra, Chairman of the Subcommittee, presiding.

Present: Representatives Hoekstra, Tancredo, Wilson, and Kind.

Staff Present: Christine Wolfe, Professional Staff Member; Dan Lara, Press Secretary and Cheryl Johnson, Minority Counsel/Education and Oversight.

Chairman Hoekstra. Good afternoon. A quorum being present, the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations will come to order. Without objection, I ask that the record be held open for 14 days to allow for Member statements, witnesses, written testimony and other material to be submitted for the record.

OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN PETE HOEKSTRA, SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE

Welcome to all of you, and thank you for coming and observing a congressional hearing at work. Over the last four years, our Subcommittee On Oversight and

Investigations has been embarked on a project that we call **Education At A Crossroads.** The purpose of **Education At A Crossroads** has been to take a look at a variety of issues, but primarily, what we wanted to do was to travel around the country. We wanted to hear from states and local education officials as to what was working in education in their states, what was not working, some of the challenges that they faced, but most importantly, we wanted to get an assessment from them as to the effectiveness of the federal role in education.

If you don't know, the federal government, on average, provides somewhere in the neighborhood of 7 to 9 percent of any state's education funding for K through 12. So what we wanted to do was to go and take a look at what was working in the states, what types of strategies they were putting in place to improve the academic achievement for all of their students, and then to get an answer to the question as to whether the federal government was helping or hindering in that process.

We did a survey early on in this process that identified hundreds of different programs sponsored at the federal level that are targeted at K through 12 education. We'd like to hear back from grass-roots America, education officials at the local level, and education officials at the state level, as to whether we are helping or whether we are hurting.

We'd like to answer some questions such as, "When you send a dollar to Washington for education, how much of that dollar actually gets back to New Mexico to help you educate the children in your communities?" or "When you participate in a program from Washington, how much of your resources may or may not be diverted from educating your children because of filling out bureaucratic red tape from Washington?"

"Is the stimulus for new and exciting ideas that improve education at the local level from Washington, or do you frequently find that at the state and local level there are things that you would like to do to improve education for your children, but as you take a look at the rules and the regulations that you get from Washington, you find that you may not be able to participate or actually implement those programs with federal support?" So those are the kinds of things that we have been working on.

Over the last 3 ½ to 4 years, I think we have visited 18 states. This is actually, I believe, our 20th hearing where we have gotten input from people at the State and local level. We've visited a diverse set of states and schools. We've been to the Bronx in New York, we've been to where they have the voucher program, so we've been to inner-city Cleveland, we've been to Milwaukee, inner-city Chicago, we've been to a small town or a smaller town in my district called Battle Creek, Michigan, we've been to Little Rock, Arkansas, we've been to Kansas and to Northern California.

And for those of you who are now becoming concerned that we are going on junkets and playing golf, let me just tell you that I left my house this morning ten hours ago, and courtesy of Northwest Airlines, I finally got here a half hour ago. That is the second airline that I tried today. And when we're done with this, we're on our way to Colorado.

But it has been very much a learning experience for us. It has been a bipartisan effort as we, as Members on both sides of the aisle try to get a rough perspective on how

effective $35 billion of Washington education spending is on a national basis.

With that, I'd like to turn it over to my colleague from the other side of the aisle, Mr. Ron Kind from Wisconsin.

WRITTEN OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN PETE HOEKSTRA, SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE - SEE APPENDIX A

STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN RON KIND, SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE

Mr. Kind. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

As Mr. Hoekstra indicated, my name is Ron Kind. I represent the western part of the state of Wisconsin. This is my second term in Congress. I want to especially welcome the students who are in attendance in the audience today. This is part of what we do as Members of Congress. We have hearings, listen to witnesses testifying with regards to a whole host of issues, and get feedback on various programs that the federal government's involved with, but we also listen to some of the innovative ideas and changes that are taking place at the state and local level so that we can share that information with other parts of the country.

I especially appreciate the chance to come back here to Albuquerque. This isn't my first time visiting. I was here in the mid '80s. I was actually able to ride in a bull riding contest in Albuquerque when I came through here, and became very familiar with the Sandia mountain man, and that wonderful discovery that took place in the mountains not too far from where we're sitting today.

This is a wonderful opportunity for us to get outside of Washington, stretch our legs a little bit, and hear from people at the local level about a very serious issue that we've been dealing with in Congress; dropout rates throughout the country. I have to commend Senator Bingaman for his efforts to raise to the national level the recommendation to Secretary Riley, given the urgency of the challenge that we're facing in this area, that we needed to form a task force. Secretary Riley, in fact, did assemble a panel of experts to take a look in much greater detail at the dropout rate, especially in the Hispanic community.

At Senator Bingaman's request, the panel has been looking at this, and is recommending solutions. The group that was formed is actually called the Hispanic

Dropout Project, and it found that widespread misunderstandings of the underlying causes of dropouts exist throughout the country.

I'm especially looking forward to the testimony we're going to hear from the witnesses. Members of a very fine panel will be testifying before us and answering some of our questions. But, more particularly, I'll be interested to hear from the witness panels how the federal government can better partner with you at the state and local level to make the changes that are necessary to deal with the challenges that we're facing.

I mean, if students aren't succeeding here in Albuquerque or in New Mexico, it's going to be a concern locally here and for the state of New Mexico. But it also has to be a top priority for the national government and for our country as a whole, because we just can't afford, going into the 21st century, allowing students to be left behind in what is going to be a very competitive job marketplace, with a new economy forming and the technological revolutions upon us right now.

And there are many different facets that go into improving the education system. I think it's going to include the private sector being intimately involved. And that in large part is why we're here today to hear testimony on the ideas that you've been working on at the local level, what programs from Congress are working and assisting you in your goals, what aren't working, what can be improved upon, what can be scrapped. That is really the intent of this hearing today.

And so I look forward to hearing the testimony, and in particular some of the initiatives that have been coming out of Congress and from the administration of recent years. Many programs are geared to improving the quality of K through 12 education, but also preschool initiatives and after-school programs. We have an adult education act that was passed, the American Reading program, and the Read Write Now Summer Education Program For Students, the immigrant and migrant education programs, and a class size reduction initiative that many states are now pursuing. But President Clinton, in particular, has been adamant in trying to encourage Congress to appropriate more resources to class sizes.

On a school bill that just passed last year, the Teacher Empowerment Act, a portion of the bill places a lot of emphasis on improving the quality of teachers entering the classrooms so we have well-qualified teachers who are certified and qualified in the subject matter that they're being asked to teach. If there's one sure indication of how well a student's going to perform in the classroom, it's the quality of the teacher, whether it's a large class or a small class, which we have to work with. And we know that there's a lot more work that needs to be done in the area of recruitment and retention of qualified teachers. One of the great challenges we're going to face throughout the country is the approximately 2 million teachers shortage in the next ten years; qualified people in the classroom.

A new piece of legislation that just passed is going to be identifying disadvantaged students at early grade levels and working with them and getting information to them so that, if they succeed in their secondary education, there will be post-secondary education opportunities waiting for them on graduation from high school.

So these are some of the programs that we have been working on, and any feedback and insight that you can give us on how they are being applied at a local level

will be much appreciated. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman Hoekstra. Thank you.

Just a couple of things as we get going. Where are the lights? All right; high tech stuff here. What the lights mean is that, we try to limit Members and witnesses to roughly five-minute statements. Their entire written record and written testimony is put into the formal record. The green light typically will mean, you've got plenty of time, the yellow light means you're running out, and the red light means, please stop, your time is up.

And how forcefully that is actually implemented depends on the Chairman. I'm known to have a weak gavel, which means that if you go beyond the red for a little while, that's okay, but with two, good-sized panels, we hope that we stay to that. That's the high-tech nature of our business that we do in Washington.

What I'd like to do now is to turn it over to your Congresswoman, Heather Wilson, who encouraged us to come and take a look at New Mexico and hear what you're doing, and to get a better perspective of what's going on. And so, Heather, thank you very much for inviting us. We're glad to be here and we're glad to hear the testimony here from New Mexico.

We're also looking forward to taking what we've learned here and perhaps implementing it into legislation. Heather's going to have an opening statement, and also introduce the first panel to all of us, since they're her constituents.

And then, the guy sitting in between here is Congressman Tom Tancredo from Colorado and Washington. We typically limit opening statements to one Member from each party, and then we go directly to the panel. But because of the special nature of the field hearing, we also give the courtesy of an opening statement and introducing the panel to the hometown Congressperson. So, Heather, welcome.

OPENING STATEMENT OF CONGRESSWOMAN HEATHER WILSON, 1ST DISTRICT OF NEW MEXICO, US HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. Wilson. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for coming to hold this hearing in Albuquerque. I think this is the first time, at least in the last ten years, the Congressional Committee on Education and the Workforce has been to New Mexico. I think it's important that you have come to New Mexico because, in some ways, New Mexico is a snapshot of where America is going. We are the first minority-majority state. We have some emerging high tech businesses here, and great public research universities, and we get a sense here for where America is

going.

I want to share with you why I think it's important to have this hearing and why we need to focus and bring more resources and more thought to bear on improving public education. In fact, I think that it is the most important and critical issue facing America today. I was reading U.S. News and World Report over the holidays, and it was looking at the 20th century in the year 1900. Fifteen percent of American adults had a high school education. In the year 2000, that number has jumped to 85 percent because of a commitment by American leaders early in the 20th century to have universal public high school.

My grandparents didn't have high school diplomas, but they didn't need them because, while 15 percent of Americans had a high school degree, a third of Americans were still working on the farm. It's not that way anymore, and it's changing even more rapidly for our children.

So what will America look like in 2020, and how do we need to change the way we do public education to make sure that the kids graduating in 2020 are prepared for the world that awaits them?

By 2020 we will have mapped the human gene and it's entirely likely that any medical therapy you have will be personally tailored for you. The computer that sits on your desk today will be eligible for the Smithsonian, and it will be ten generations out of date. The entire body of knowledge contained in the Library of Congress will be stored in a space of 1 cubic inch. Your television and your telephone and your computer will probably be one device, and when the phone rings, you may put on glasses with an earpiece and greet the caller somewhere in a virtual chat room.

All of these wonders, and many more that we cannot even imagine today, are being unleashed by entrepreneurs or common men with uncommon vision, and the enabling force that has brought us to this point was the belief that education should not just be for the elite, but that every child has the potential to do great things if given the tools and expected to achieve. In fact, 90 percent of the scientists who have ever lived in human history are alive today. They are the ones creating the inventions that will define our society in 2020.

We have made the transition in the 20th century from an agrarian economy to an industrial economy. Now we're making the transition to the information economy. It will change our society as surely as the urbanization of America changed our society. It will affect the way we get health care, the way we communicate, the way we're entertained, the way we do business, the way we shop and the way we learn.

We have to prepare our young people for that world or we will be left behind as a nation. That means we've got to start coloring outside of the lines, and I've got to suggest some of the things, not all of which are the responsibility of the federal government, that we need to do that.

We need a longer school year. We need to raise the graduation requirements for science and math. We need to end social promotion. We need to increase the mandatory school attendance age from 16 to 18 unless you're going into a training program. We need greater variety in the public school system and more choices for parents within that

system. We need to make it easier for second career teachers to get into the classroom, and we need more high-quality preschools and easier access to them for poor children. We need accountability for results so that no child is left behind. And we need to recognize that parents are a child's first and most important teachers. We need to bring art and, particularly, music back into schools, particularly the elementary schools. We need a charter school loan guarantee fund to get more variety in the public school system. We need to focus on improving early care in education, and particularly making sure that students who are dependent upon public assistance, young preschoolers dependent on public assistance, are in high-quality preschools.

All of this takes money; that is true. So did universal high school education. So did the GI Bill. So did Pell Grants. The alternative is to choose to lag behind as a nation.

It's my pleasure to introduce some of my friends and neighbors to the Committee, and we have a wonderful panel of people who have great stories to tell. Miquela Rivera is the Deputy Director of Early Care Prevention and Intervention Division in the Children, Youth & Families Department in Santa Fe, which is the Department that I came from before I came to Congress. It's very good to have you here and have your expertise.

Kyle Smith, who is here with Lois Weigand, is the Director of the New Mexico Child Care Association, as well as being the Director of Southwest Child Care. I have to say that I first met Kyle when we were doing some hearings on the job care regulations. I knew I liked her immediately when she stood up and said, "I'm really not used to talking to a crowd that is above the average age of five." She is a wonderful person and a great organizer, with important things to say, even to difficult adults who probably need some adult supervision of their own.

Chris Baca is the head of Youth Development, Inc, which runs the Headstart program in this county. About three years ago, Headstart in Bernalillo County was as close to Chapter 11 as you can get for a publicly funded program. There were only six sites in the city to serve thousands of people and YDI stepped in and took over Headstart and has not only improved the quality of Headstart, but also extended it to 32 centers in a short period of time. So if we're looking at how you improve Headstart, here's the man who knows.

And Dr. Peter Winograd, who is the Director, Center for Teacher Education at the University of New Mexico, is doing extemporaneous speaking here today. He was a last minute addition to our panel, and I met him when he was talking about the need to mentor new teachers. It was his idea that we were able to incorporate, by amendment, into the Teacher Empowerment Act to make sure those kinds of programs are included in what's authorized re: Federal professional development monies. He's going to talk about what we don't know about dropouts, and what we need to know. Thank you all for coming.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF CONGRESSWOMAN HEATHER WILSON, 1ST DISTRICT OF NEW MEXICO, US HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES – SEE APPENDIX B

Chairman Hoekstra. We'll go in the order that Ms. Wilson introduced you.

Dr. Rivera.

STATEMENT OF DR. MIQUELA RIVERA, DEPUTY DIRECTOR – EARLY CARE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION DIVISION, NEW MEXICO CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES DEPARTMENT, SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

Dr. Rivera. Good afternoon. Mr. Chairman, Honorable Members of the Committee, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today about the connection between the importance of early care in education and the prevention of students dropping out of school.

As a licensed clinical psychologist who has worked with children, as an administrator of child care, child development programming and family nutrition in New Mexico, and as a concerned mother, I cannot stress to you enough the importance of quality early care and education programming and its influence on a person's future.

Kindergarten is typically the first mandated step to a formal education, but preparation for school begins long before then. Research has shown that by the time you get to kindergarten, half of your brain development is complete. Preparation for school success begins at birth, and school children must be ready in seven critical areas:

Language: Our ability to communicate, both in receiving messages and in sending them.

Cognitive abilities: Thinking and reasoning, assimilating new information and learning to apply it.

The third area is in social skills: Getting along with others, picking up cues from other people and learning to live responsibly in a community.

The fourth is emotional development: The ability to attach to other people, to understand their feelings, as well as our own, and to demonstrate self-control.

The fifth is psychological development: Including self-concept, the ability to cope and to perceive the world and how it should be.

The sixth are physical abilities: Coordination, movement and mastery of the world around us.

And seven is moral development: Our sense of right and wrong and our understanding of the choices that we make.

Of course, not everyone develops at the same pace, but we do each have a critical window in which certain areas of development must occur, and if, in some areas, this does not occur, we have lost an opportunity forever. In some cases, it is retrievable, but it's almost impossible, in some areas, to totally catch up.

To me, and to those in this field, the connection between quality early care and education and school success is apparent. If you're ready for school, you're more apt to enjoy it and complete it. Nationally, millions of children are in child-care, and that preparation for school success is going to happen away from their parents. What we teach our children and how we teach it matters from the moment they are born, and since the great learning potential happens from the time between the ages of two and ten, quality child care matters.

The High/Scope Preschool Curriculum Comparison longitudinal study, which began in 1967 and showed that children who are born in poverty experience fewer emotional problems and later have fewer criminal arrests if they attended a preschool program focused on child-initiated activity. In other words, if a child learns to explore and is able to be supported by teachers, they can succeed in productive ways.

The Abecedarian Project from the Carolinas, which was published this year, showed that early childhood education makes a critical difference in the later success of children, and it was a carefully designed, controlled research project which focused on all the areas I listed. Those children had higher cognitive scores than those who did not participate.

So how can you help? Start early. Increase and support the amount of finance to early care and education and child-care, and support adequate training of teachers.

Headstart has raised the educational expectation of their teachers nationally in general education. Child-care providers need to be supported so they can do the same. Compensate early care and education providers for their efforts. Turnover in child-care is high mainly because of low pay. If we fix that, I think that tide will be stemmed.

Expect appropriate curriculum. Health and safety are important, but so is what we teach.

And very important is that I ask that you support families, not simply the most impoverished, but also the working family, the ones who are not necessarily on state or federal assistance, but those who struggle from day-to-day to make a difference and to contribute. We'll all benefit as a result. Thank you.

Thank you very much.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DR.MIQUELA RIVERA, DEPUTY DIRECTOR – EARLY CARE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

DIVISION, NEW MEXICO CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES DEPARTMENT, SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO - SEE APPENDIX C

Chairman Hoekstra. Thank you very much. Ms. Weigand.

STATEMENT OF LOIS WEIGAND, DIRECTOR, EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER AND ACADEMY, FARMINGTON, NEW MEXICO

Ms. Weigand. Mr. Chairman, Congresswoman Wilson, other Members of the panel. I'm the Director of the Emmanuel Baptist Child Development Center in Farmington. I'm representing New Mexico Child Care Association for more than 100 members statewide.

Thank you for allowing me to share my concerns about early childhood education. I have worked with children and their families since 1962. Like all beginning teachers, my ideal was to make a difference in the life of students. With all the cultural and social changes, I came to realize that I needed to reach children before they became teenagers. I started working with children from birth through kindergarten, on a volunteer basis in 1972, as preschool coordinator in my church. In 1992, after more than 26 years in a public school classroom, I retired and began concentrating on early childhood education on a full-time basis.

I applaud this panel for looking into the link between early childhood education and increasing the high school graduation rate. Good beginnings last forever. I believe it's also important to look at the link between early childhood education and youthful violence. Some of the same factors that cause youth to drop out of school also are in the background of the violence we have seen.

The violent crime rate among juveniles has quadrupled over the last 25 years, and the last decade has seen a doubling of weapons offenses for children ages 10 through 17. Self-directed violence has also soared with the suicide rate for children 10 through 14 years tripling in the same period. Aggravated assault by teenagers has jumped by 64 percent in the last decade. Forty American school children have been killed in schools each year for the past five years.

School resources for dealing with delinquent children are overwhelmed beyond their capacities. The juvenile prison system is also overwhelmed. It's a very sad thought that the building of prisons is a major growth industry in the nation.

In March of 1997, the U.S. Department of Justice released the results of a new study that showed if present rates of incarceration continue, one out of 20 babies born in the United States today will spend part of their adult lives in state or federal prisons.

We are greatly concerned about government spending on the U.S. health system. You may not have noticed that the cost of the criminal justice system is three times the cost of the nation's health care budget.

Media coverage of violence acts as if violent behavior suddenly emerges from a developmental void. It's rare for a story to look for sources of this behavior, even in preadolescence or elementary school. In order to understand this type of violent behavior, we must look before preschool to the first two or three months of life. These months, including the nine-month prenatal development and the first two years after birth, harbor the seeds of violence for a growing percent of America's children.

As more brain research indicates, we must appreciate the crucial nature of physical, emotional and cognitive care during the first 33 months of life. As we begin to discover the previously unimaginable impact of the smallest insult to the brain at the crucial time in development, we're beginning to see that much of what we had formerly written off as unknowable in origin, and, therefore, unchangeable, can and must be prevented.

Rachel Carson's book, Silent Spring, showed us the link between toxins and the destruction of our ecosystems. More than 30 years after Silent Spring, we have yet to understand that the same dynamic is at work in the human experience. Toxic experiences, family violence, abuse and chronic neglect, along with toxic substances, such as nicotine, alcohol and illegal drugs, are being physically and emotionally absorbed by our babies in record numbers.

As in the natural world, these are complex links between the quality of human development and the status of the human community. Infancy is a crucial developmental stage when an individual forms the core of his/her conscience, develops the ability to trust and relate to others, lays down the foundation for lifelong learning and thinking. But quality of the human environment is directly tied to each individual's ability to love, to empathize with others and to engage in complex thinking. By failing to understand the cumulative effects of the poisons assaulting our babies in the form of abuse, neglect, and toxic substances, we are participating in our own destruction.

Our ignorance of and indifference to the complex nature of infancy has significantly contributed to one sign of system distress that we can no longer ignore. Violence is epidemic in American society. It dominates our media, permeates our play, steals our loved ones, ruins our families and claims a growing percentage of our young.

Each year, the Children's Defense Fund publishes a yearbook entitled The State of America's Children. According to their 1996 and 1997 issues, a baby is born every minute to a teen mother; the mortality rate for American babies under the age of one is higher than that of any other industrialized nation; 25 percent of our preschool children live below the poverty rate; one in four children, in five states sampled, enter foster care before his or her first birthday; one in three victims of physical abuse is a baby less than 12 months old. Every day, a baby dies of abuse or neglect at the hands of his or her caregivers; three out of every four children murdered in the 26 top industrialized nations combined were American; only 8.4 percent of infant and toddler care in U.S. child care centers is considered developmentally appropriate, 51.1 percent is judged mediocre quality care, 40.4 percent poor quality care.

These statistics are scary, but they are factors that can be helped with money and education that is put into place in time to make a difference. There are many high quality child-care centers in New Mexico that are already making a difference in the lives of many children.

Dropping out of school is also linked to learning disabilities. The vast majority of children classified in special education have specific learning disabilities such as reading or an information processing problem. In 1976 to 1994, the number of children with specific learning disabilities requiring special services went from just under 800,000 to nearly 2.4 million, an increase of 45 percent. Five percent of all children enrolled in school require these services.

It's also interesting to note that Ritalin is now being prescribed for 3 to 5 percent of all children in the United States to control attention disorders. Because most of these children are males, this means that 10 to 12 percent of all boys in the United States between the ages of 6 and 14 are on this medication.

Our challenge is to move this information into the cultural mainstream and into the legislative bodies to create a critical mass of people who know and who care and who will enable this information to go from understanding to practice.

My mother used to say, "An ounce of prevention is worth more than a pound of cure." The information we now have on the brain and its development gives us a new opportunity. If healthy emotional and cognitive development is substantially rooted in our experiences during first 12 months of life, then the adults who guide this development must have society's attention. It is this group, the nurturers of our children, who are the key to preventing violence and school dropouts.

As they shape the future, they need the tools, the skills, the information, and the social values to adequately do the job. These early childhood educators must be important to those who are providing the funding, regardless of whether the funding is state or federal. When those caring for children are themselves healthy, have adequate financial and emotional support, and are equipped with information and skills on what to expect of children, how to discipline constructively, how to manage anger and stress, the children in their care benefit. When such needs are poorly met, it is the children who absorb the consequences.

We must stop thinking of this important group of people, the early childhood educators, as baby-sitters and give them the status, the training, and the income they need and deserve to make a difference in our most important resource, our children.

Headstart programs have made a difference now for low income children for several years, and their move to focus not only on the three- to five-year-olds, but the birth through age two with the Early Headstart program are important, but these are not enough. Federal block grants given to states need to be regulated so states disburse these funds with equity for all children.

Beginning in July 1999, New Mexico child care providers received their first significant rate increase in nine years, but the increase was still not up to the 1997 market rate survey. There should not be a difference in the subsidy rates paid in rural and metro.

It does not cost less to care for a child in Farmington than it does in Albuquerque. Child-care workers' average wage is $5.15 to $6 per hour, with no benefits. Some child-care centers will not take state funded children because the state does not pay enough to care for them. The average rate paid by the state is $13.25 a day, with the average cost to take care of a child at $20 a day.

When I testified to a state legislative committee in October, I followed one child through the $3.5 million increase in funds. Her situation is changed at this time because of domestic violence. Lauren's mother and her four sisters have had to move into a shelter. She had been functioning as a single mom, but decided to give the children's father another chance, but it did not work. We received $8 more for the month of July for Lauren's care. With an average of 21 days of attendance in a month, this gives us an increase of $.38 cents a day for the care of this infant. Were we to break this down further with Lauren, who arrives just after 7:00 a.m. and is picked up at 6:00 p.m., this gives us an increase of $.03 cents per hour.

Poorly subsidized child care not only impacts families, but also employees of the centers who cannot remain open. San Juan County has had five child-care centers close their doors between May 1998 and April 1999. Child-care workers are unemployed, parents lose child-care, children are uprooted from familiar people and their environment, and all the brain research shows this is not good. Mothers are not going to be able to go off welfare if there's no one to care for their children. Mothers are generally not able to enter the ranks of child-care workers because of lack of skills and education.

There is another kind of worry with child-care; unlicensed, unregulated homes. How many children are being cared for in unregulated homes? There's no way of knowing. Untrained providers caring for children in this critical time period for the first 33 months who do not give them their necessary stimulation for their brains to develop, just perpetuate the problems this hearing is addressing.

We cannot improve the dropout rate among teenagers without addressing the origin of the factors that cause these children to fail. It is imperative to address early childhood education before we lose a generation.

Thank you for allowing me an opportunity to speak.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF LOIS WEIGAND, DIRECTOR, EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER, FARMINGTON, NEW MEXICO – SEE APPENDIX D

Chairman Hoekstra. Thank you. Sometimes we find that we have to calibrate machines, and that five minutes in Washington is a little different than five minutes in New Mexico. But the testimony is so compelling that I wanted to give you the opportunity to finish.

Mr. Kind. It's not very different, Mr. Chairman, in my experience.

Chairman Hoekstra. But if everyone's five minutes is that long, we're going to be here a long time. However, your entire testimony will be submitted for the record.

Dr. Venegas.

STATEMENT OF DR. MOISES VENEGAS, DIRECTOR, THE ALBUQUERQUE PARTNERSHIP, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Dr. Venegas. Thank you for the opportunity to share some of our information with you here. I think some of us are a little bit older than others, about 53 years. I've been involved in education as a student, a public schoolteacher and a university professor, and the last 15 years as a parent and student advocate. I almost feel like I'm also pessimistically optimistic, if I give it up, or don't give it up. So within that framework, I think I provide some information.

There's a favorite song that I like; you know I still like songs. Phil Collins has a song, "Another Day In Paradise," and it kind of reminds me of when I talk about dropouts in education, or about the homeless lady calling out and feeling tired and cold. I think her pleading is saying, maybe it's over, maybe, Lord, just give me another day in paradise, maybe just kind of move me. And I'm thinking at my age, maybe we should be moved sometimes, or some of us that make decisions should be moved, and given another day in paradise.

So we ask a person, what is the data in terms of school completion? And has it changed in the last 40 or 50 years? And have we done anything about it? We really haven't. We talk a good game, but we haven't. So what is the current count? It's kind of nice to hear about silicon and the digital revolution, the booming market, and I'm thinking, wouldn't it be nice, wouldn't it be nice for some of us. So I always like to ask myself the question and those are the ones that we're talking about right now.

If we look at the elementary schools, we look at the Peabody Assessment that's typically used in a lot of the schools for language development. I've got to caution you, it's language development, and not intelligence. We looked at 69 where it says, 6 were bilingual, 28 were monolingual Spanish speakers, and 35 were monolingual English speakers.

The results of that language development test for these students who were about five years old, were 2 of the students scored at the two-year level, 20 at the three-year level, 21 at the four-year level, 19 at the five, 5 at the six, and 2 at the seven-year level.

Then we said, well, let's wait three more years and let's see where they are. So we looked at a sample of achievement data for a school district, and we looked at minority enrollment, to see where the students were. Most of the scores typically in this school

district, in New Mexico in a large urban school district, were the same. In terms of percentile, with 150 being obviously the middle, the scores that we found were scoring at the 13th percentile, 20th percentile, 22, 24, 26, 27, 27, and 28.

So where are they going? We track them and they're not the same students, but believe me, most of them look like the same and not typically like the panel there. In Albuquerque, we looked at 1987 and 1998. For the Anglo population, the dropout rate was 16.3 percent in 1987, and 23.9 percent in 1998. For African Americans in 1987, it was 22.9 percent, and in 1998 it was 40 percent dropout. For Hispanics, it was 23.8 percent, and 43.1, and for Native Americans it was 29.3 percent and 41.8 percent.

I wish we could have had a Native American present with us to share some information, but I don't think we have. That would have been a good opportunity for someone to share information, like analysis and correlation. I'm thinking, sometimes we're not that bright. But as I was looking at the data I'm saying, the less affluent, the less politically empowered and the blacker and browner you are in this country, the less possibility that you will graduate and that you will achieve high. That's pretty standard, and that's been there year in and year out.

You were asking about programs. I think we always have this question. I think people are always thinking about that magic program, you're going to give me that magic recipe, that formula. And there are some good programs, but I think the first thing that I would recommend that's probably difficult for us in this country to believe is the acceptance and belief that all children can learn. Even poor ones can learn. Believe it. It's kind of revolutionary to think that they can, but they can.

But they haven't if we look at the record; they haven't here in New Mexico, and they haven't anywhere else. So we looked at a framework, and it wasn't necessarily a framework of a program, but rather of attributes or characteristics of either programs or educational frameworks. We raised some questions about some of the things that are child based and speak to the needs of students. Are the programs child based and speak to the needs of the students rather than to the teacher's union?

We're not very happy with the teacher's union. We love teachers, but we're not very happy with the teacher's union. Is the teacher certified to deal with the 3 and 5 year old? Are they certified? Look at Headstart, look at Evenstart, and look at early childhood education. You know, it's not the same. Are teachers prepared? For the most part, we find that they're not. They're nice people, but not certified. In accountability, the most important thing that I would consider, is that which gets measured gets done.

I would say, do away or restructure completely Title I all over this country; Title I "pull-out" programs. Students start behind, and in five years they're still behind, and in high school they drop out. So why are we spending so much money, if the return on that investment is not there? You know, can we wake up? Can we put the light on for those of us who are providing those resources?

Finally, I think in terms of program framework, you might look at the effective school model such as some instructional leadership, some high expectations for every student, a safe and orderly environment, a clear and focused mission, time on task, timely and frequent monitoring of student progress. Do it all the time. Let's do it all the time.

You do it all the time with your families; home school.

I think the last statement I would like to make is that I'm almost reminded of Ron Edmonds, Harvard professor, University of Michigan, African American, who provided a lot of research. He's no longer with us, he's passed away, but he said he didn't think, and I think I agree, that the issue of who was learning and who was not achieving and dropping out was not about pedagogy, was not about reading programs or specific Headstart programs. In this country, we have always educated those that we want to educate. We have always done that. Now, do we want to educate the minorities: Hispanics, Native Americans and poor people that we haven't been able? I'm asking you, do you have the will to do it? I would think that you do. Thank you very much.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DR. MOISES VENEGAS, DIRECTOR, THE ALBUQUERQUE PARTNERSHIP, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO - SEE APPENDIX E

Chairman Hoekstra. Thank you very much.

Dr. Florez.

STATEMENT OF DR. VIOLA FLOREZ, DEAN, COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Dr. Florez. Mr. Chairman, and Members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity.

Teacher quality and its impact on students, I think, is something that is really critical for us nationally and within the state. The quality of the teacher determines the success of students, as indicated by the research data of today. With what we know about learning and teaching, it is critical that we pay attention to teachers as professionals with time and resources.

Some of the things that Dr. Venegas mentioned about students and their learning, ties to teachers, the diverse pool of teachers, and what teachers need to know to teach children that come from different languages, different cultures and different backgrounds. Recruiting, preparing and retaining pre-K through 12 quality teachers is critical for improving our schools today. The recruitment, the preparation, the induction, which is the mentoring, and the advanced professional development and evaluation, and accountability of what we do, and intervention so that children can be helped.

In order for students needs to be met, there has to be an ongoing professional development of educators. That means teachers, administrators, counselors and other school personnel that have direct contact with children. The high quality so that it's standards based and student based to meet the needs of each children. There's no way that anyone can stay on the cutting edge without continuing their own professional growth, such as in the area of technology, as Representative Wilson mentioned, the area of literacy, why we have the school dropouts that we do.

And a better question, what is it that makes our students stay in school? If we know why they stay in school, it may help us to find out, why don't they stay in school? What's missing? And school violence.

Also, a day school between 8:00 to 3:00 or 9:00 to 4:00 is not enough. Having strong and well-planned summer programs that enhance knowledge and skills for students' grades from a very young age to high school age, and after-school programs that focus on student development and learning is important for student success. I know that the cost may be high up front, but the long-term effects are positive, especially when it relates to the retention of students.

The child-care research that is available to us now in relationship to brain research is so critical and is so important. If we pay attention to what it's basically saying, if we pay attention to really early learning, early development, and early developmental practices in how children advance, we can make a big difference in how our public education changes.

To recruit and retain quality teachers, we have to provide particular services. Teacher compensation must be restructured to offer career pathways taking into consideration credentialing, responsibilities, merit pay, and incentives for quality teachers to stay in a classroom. The recruitment of competent individuals to enter the teaching profession also impacts student achievement. For us here in New Mexico, at the University of New Mexico and throughout the state, this means recruiting educational assistants. These are teachers that are already in the classroom that need to finish their degrees. Individuals with degrees in other fields, individuals interested in second careers, retirees, and young people searching for a profession. At the national level, this requires support for institutions of higher education that prepare teachers and administrators and other school personnel for schools.

Induction; for the beginning teachers, she gets out or he gets out into the classroom. What is it that they need? It's that mentoring. We have many teachers that do not stay in the classroom. They leave. We prepare them, they're excellent, they can go just about anywhere, they can choose other careers, and they do, and they leave and do not go into the teaching profession. Locally, it's my understanding that we lose at least 40 percent of our teachers within the first two years of being in the classroom. So we need to figure out how to mentor first-year teachers so that they gain confidence and skills.

Why students drop out of school is complex, and it's not linked only to one factor. However, we do know from the research that certain conditions in the classroom can make a difference for students, and it definitely makes a difference for teachers. Working conditions for teachers are critical, and reflect the value of them as professionals, what

they have studied to do and how well prepared they are in dealing and preparing children.

One of the common themes in the research about dropouts is that it's the personal interest of the teacher per child. How well can the teacher relate to that child, their personality, the interests of that child, and the very life of the child, while looking at the child as a whole, and where that child comes from? Words like respect, attention, awareness, encouragement and pride are the common indicators.

In closing, I would like to stress the importance of supporting education by instituting sound practices at the state and especially at the national level and policies that make a difference for children. The educational research that is needed so that we know how to do better is so critical, and your support for institutions of higher education for the preparation of individuals for schools is a very important matter. Thank you.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DR.VIOLA FLOREZ, DEAN, COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO – SEE APPENDIX F

Chairman Hoekstra. Thank you. Mr. Baca.

STATEMENT OF CHRIS BACA, PRESIDENT/CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, YOUTH DEVELOPMENT, INCORPORATED, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Mr. Baca. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, distinguished Members of the panel. My name is Chris Baca. I've been the President and CEO of YDI for the last 27 years, and we operate the Headstart programs here in Albuquerque, Bernalillo County, but also in rural New Mexico, Rio Arriba and Taos Counties.

I wanted to deviate a little bit from my prepared text and just make some comparisons. It's interesting having started working with Headstart children three years ago and more recently with Early Headstart, which are kids that are six months old, and most of my career having been spent in working with adolescents. As Heather knows, when she was Secretary of Children, Youth & Families, we ended up dealing with the kids that were most in need, most at risk.

And to really parallel, what works with Headstart children, we have found, works with the older kids that are in serious trouble in terms of catching them up in their education. As an example, in Headstart, we limit our classroom size to 15 to 17. We actually are attempting to have a student pupil ratio of 3 to 20 which is really significant in that these kids who are mostly or all from poverty backgrounds, all from

disadvantaged neighborhoods, all struggling to learn, because the same kind of program works for the kids we're working with in high school, as the ones that have flunked out.

In our dropout prevention programs, we get what you call the elite classified freshmen. Simply stated, they flunk their freshman year. And as we know learning being what it is, being taught in the school is sequential. If you're five credits behind when you're 15, it means you'll be 19 when you graduate if you can make up those credits during that period of time. If you get any further behind, using that same model, you'll probably be 22 years old when you get those 24 credits.

As Dr. Venegas mentioned, what hasn't improved in these kids' lives is their economics. You can predict by their family income what their education level is going to be. Now, there are exceptions to the rule in every case. I, myself, come from a family of 11. Nobody in my family had ever graduated from high school. My father's grade level was the 3rd grade, my mother's was the 5th grade, and I went to, supposedly, one of the worst schools in the district, which was Rio Grande High School.

There are exceptions to the rule, but in my 30 years of experience, unless you change the economic circumstances underlying these families, the attempts to address their educational achievement is going to be that much more difficult. Why? Very simply, because their need to survive outstrips their need to be educated, though the education is what you need to be able to survive. It's kind of this vicious circle.

And what do we have to do? We know that Headstart works. We know that the Headstart indoctrination, the learning that is set in motion with these younger kids, helps the kids out until they're about in the 5th grade, and then the learning levels begin to slip back. And the reason why is because it's very hard for a 5th grader to change the economic situation of a family. The economic life circumstance again begins to catch up to that family.

In this booming economy with the groundswell that has raised many, many incomes, there's a whole ton of families that that have not benefited. The information superhighway that we know is much like the highways that bypassed rural America and left communities dying on the vine because they did not have access to that highway. Well, that superhighway is also the information superhighway and it is bypassing many of our families and many of our children. They do not have access to that. They may have access to it in the school environment, from 7:00 to 3:00, but when they go back into their community that has not changed in 34 years, they do not have access, they can't participate, and the family cannot participate in this economy.

What we have proposed in using the Headstart model is working with higher-risk kids is smaller classrooms, more individualized attention, nontraditional hours, and more focus on what's going on in the home. The reasons why schools can't help these kids is because they're teaching for the middle; for those kids that are prepared and ready to learn in school. By and large, the schools don't have the time because they're further behind, nor do they have the resources.

Community-based agencies like YDI, who are in the neighborhoods seven days a week, 24 hours a day, have a better chance because they're working with the total family and they're not just working with the educational environment. They're talking about health, they're talking about the economic situation, they're talking about work, they're

talking about better education, and better employment opportunities.

If we were to apply what we've learned through Headstart, we would look at a continual process of helping the most at-risk families. I think, that as you begin to impact the most at-risk families and the laws of geometric progression begin to take over, and they begin to emulate and model the successful members of their family, the economic tie will also upraise them, as well. That ends up happening when you target early. It sounds great, but it really does have meaningful impact.

The truth of the matter is that it just doesn't raise the whole family, and after a while, that inoculation or that vaccination effect that Headstart and Early Headstart may have had begins to wear off because the family did not participate in that. We are implementing, in our particular Headstart and Early Headstart Programs, educational programs and training programs for the parent, so the child and the parent can go to school at the same time. That's the only way this thing is going to work, in my opinion. Otherwise, it's throwing good money after bad. We're trying to do the right thing, but we're not doing it in the right fashion.

And it doesn't matter, you know, what color that kid is, brown, black or white, orange or green. If they're making $15,000 a year and they have six children in that family, their educational level of success is not going to be great because the struggle to survive is great to make ends meet, and you're not getting the very basics to that family.

We have seen, time and again, why kids are not going to school. We show up at the door and knock and we ask Mrs. Whomever, "Why isn't little Johnny going to school?" Well, if you were to look at what kind of situation they're living in, and what they're trying to get by on, education at that point in time is not the great need that they have. A warm meal and a better home is what are necessary. And my approach has always been in terms of looking at education, not to look at one strand, but the totality of the family, the holistic view of the family, spiritual, mental, economic and otherwise. That's how I believe we can make more impact and raise the standard of living for everyone, and we will begin to see impact on dropout rates. Thank you.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF CHRIS BACA, PRESIDENT/CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, YOUTH DEVELOPMENT, INCORPORATED, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO – SEE APPENDIX G

Chairman Hoekstra. Thank you. The applause is highly irregular. This is part of regular order in Washington, and we discourage it but I'm not quite sure why. Who knows? It may be the tradition. I guess because of the flip side, we wouldn't want to get into it, if you didn't like what a witness would have to say, then the audience would get into booing, and hissing, and those types of things. But we'll just kind of go with the flow today.

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Thank you very much, Mr. Baca. Mr. Winograd.

STATEMENT OF PETER WINOGRAD, DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR TEACHER EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Mr. Winograd. Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to present in front of you. And, actually, there's a brief handout, **Facing The Challenges Facing Our Children**; I'm going to refer to a couple of quick graphs here.

My task today is to talk a little bit, also, on the issue of dropouts. What I'd like to do in the time before the red light goes on is talk about what we do know about dropouts, talk about what we don't know about dropouts, and what we need to do.

What we do know about dropouts is that we lose way too many students. Members of the audience can't see this, but in New Mexico, over the last ten years, 1987 to 1997, we lost about 73,000 students. That's about the size of Santa Fe, and that is way too many students to lose. We know that minority students and poor students drop out at a higher rate. Dr. Venegas said it the best; this is a political issue as much as an instructional issue.

If you take a look at the bottom of page 3, out of the 74,000 students in New Mexico who dropped out, 32 percent were white, 52 percent were Hispanic, 12 percent were Native American and almost 23 percent were black. It's just absolutely disproportional who we lose.

We also know, as the other members of the panel have talked about, that students begin to drop out early during middle school, but all of the points raised about early childhood are right on. This is just not something that happens in the last year and a child makes the decision to drop out.

At the bottom of page 2, you can see the percentages of New Mexico's 4th grade students at or above proficient on the National Assessment of Educational Progress, Reading Assessments. That's 4th grade. And for the members of the audience that don't have this, it shows that among white children in New Mexico about 35 percent are reading at grade level. That means about 65 percent are not. That's not a good picture. Among black students, 10 to 12 percent are reading at grade level. Among Hispanics, 12 to 13 percent are reading at grade level. And among Native Americans, less than 10 percent are reading at grade level.

I want to make a point. We know that everyone has a responsibility in terms of dropouts. The good research that's been done talks about what students themselves need to do, what parents and families need to do, what schools need to do, what communities need to do, what business needs to do, and what the national, state and local policies need

to do.

Part of what I'll introduce as testimony are a couple of reports. This one is the **No More Excuses, The Final Report of the Hispanic Dropout Project**, which is an extraordinarily powerful report, full of good comments. I'll also introduce the report from **New Mexico First**. For those of you outside the state, a couple of months ago, folks from all over the state came together and focused on education in New Mexico, and took a look at a lot of recommendations. So those are in there.

We know that those are successful programs, and as I just pointed out, we know what good research has to say. I want to point out a couple of things on page 4. These tie into what Dean Florez pointed out. The chart on the top of page 4 shows the classes in high poverty schools taught by unqualified teachers. It's not just that we have a shortage of high quality teachers, it's that students in high poverty schools tend to get the least prepared teachers.

The chart on the bottom shows teachers of poor school districts who lack reading resources. So the kids who need it the most get the teachers who are the least prepared and have the least resources. Now, I want to be really careful here. This does not mean we don't have dynamite teachers in high need schools, but in general, those kids get the new folks or the folks with the least amount of preparation.

What don't we know about dropouts? We don't know how to define the term consistently. There are arguments about the percentage of dropouts per year, and the general population just gets exasperated with us. What we do know is we lose too many. We don't know how to measure the rate consistently. We don't track kids, so we don't know which ones come back. We don't know when they drop out. If you'll look at the data, it simply says on lots of forms, the kid didn't show up, but we don't really know what happened to that student. We don't know how to take the successful programs that are out there and how to take them to scale.

And we don't know how to build the political will and leadership to solve the problem. This is a bipartisan issue, and one of the best things that have come out of the federal government recently is from the **National Educational Goals Panel**, and it's lessons from the state, and I'll introduce that into testimony. There's good data from a lot of states that sustain bipartisan political leadership over time and it is what makes a difference. It doesn't matter that it's Republican; it doesn't matter that it's Democrat. What matters is the statesmanship, and that's what we need.

Now, what do we need to do? We need a clear and sustained focus on improving public education, and all of the things my colleagues up here have said are absolutely on target. We need a clear and sustained focus on the issue of dropouts. And more than anything, we need to understand that the kids we are losing are valuable. Because so many of them are poor and because so many are minority, it hasn't been that big an issue for people. We need to make it that big an issue. We need national help in terms of definitions about dropouts, data collection, coordination problem solving and sharing successful models. Some of the national centers that are out there in other areas are extraordinarily helpful to us as we deal with other issues, and that's the kind of thing that we could use in the area of dropouts.

And lastly, again, we need help in developing the political will to address this issue. Your willingness to come all the way to New Mexico is excellent, and we thank you for coming, but when you go back to Washington, we need your help, bipartisan help, in really focusing on this. Thank you.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF PETER WINOGRAD, DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR TEACHER EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO – SEE APPENDIX H

Chairman Hoekstra. Thank you. We'll begin the questioning. We'll begin with Mr. Tancredo.

Mr. Tancredo. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think it was Dr. Venegas that said he had a pessimistic optimism, or optimistic pessimism about what we were here for. I certainly share that ambivalent sort of feeling about things because I can remember when I was with the U.S. Department of Education in 1983, when we produced a document called **A Nation At Risk**, and in that document we identified many of the problems that you have articulated today, not nearly as definitively as you have laid it out. But nonetheless, it was the first time I think I'd ever seen the federal government so willingly jump into the fray, and to actually identify some of the major problems that faced us.

But the pessimistic side of it is that I don't know, from what I've heard, that we've accomplished much in those 17 years. With all the focus on change, with all the resources that have been applied, certainly a significant amount, it seems that we still have not been able to actually come to grips with the reality of the situation.

In that document I remember it led to national goals, and one of the national goals of course, was the reduction of the dropout rate to 10 percent, if you define dropout as someone between 19 and 20 years old without a high school diploma or a GED. So apply some sort of common definition to it, and we wanted to get down to 10 percent by the year 2000.

Well of course we failed, but not miserably. We failed, but it's down to about 22 to 23 percent nationwide using that same definition. But, of course, that's not the truth for everybody. What's also interesting is that in 1950, the dropout rate, using that same definition, was about 50 percent. In 1940, it was about 60 percent. We have actually achieved a great deal, if you want to think about it that way, in terms of keeping kids in school.

But for certain groups of students, we have not achieved anything at all. In fact, we see it going backwards, and I'm not sure yet that I can understand why; it's very profound. Believe me, I think the information that you provided here today has been extraordinarily helpful and insightful, but I still want to know why in those certain categories. Mr. Baca you attempted I think more than anyone, to put your finger on the

fact that these kids at 5th grade, regardless of what you've done before that, go back into a home that is wondering more about how to put food on the table and keep a roof over their heads than they are in education.

But isn't that the way it's been for people in poverty? Wasn't that one of the reasons most people sought an education, to in fact, escape that phenomenon in New Mexico? That was the door. That was the way to get out of it. What has changed, do you think? Why is that not the case? Why is it that poverty has not, in fact, influenced the people living in it to look at education as their way out?

Anyone. We'll start with Mr. Baca.

Mr. Baca. I really think the cycles of poverty are pretty powerful. You get caught up in this web. It's like a bad habit. That's how I view it. You know, I don't know if any of you have ever smoked or had any other bad habits. You know it's bad for you; you just can't stop doing it. It's the same thing.

I know it sounds crazy, but some folks just can't seem to find their way out of this cycle they're in. The more they work, the less they have. And especially in today's society, when even for a good computer system, as an example, it's $1,000. For some of us, it's cheap. For others $1,000 is a heck of a whole lot of money. And I think that as America's gotten richer, the poorer have gotten better off as well, but they're still behind.

Mr. Tancredo. We face that kind of a dilemma of poverty versus wealthier people, but I must tell you, if that's the determination, as long as we have poverty we're going to have dropout rates of this nature, then let's all close this thing up and go home. You will always have poverty.

Mr. Baca. I think that's correct. I don't know that we should give up on anybody, though. I don't think that's the American way. I don't think we've turned our back on the problems, especially when we're talking about younger generations, especially when we're talking about a workforce that needs, more so than ever, its young people and it's citizenry to be at high levels of education. We all know that we've turned a corner here that's never been turned before, and I think as America ages, the numbers of our young people at least through this point in time, have not kept up with that. We have a smaller percentage. But yet, we need all those bodies to help us to continue the American experience. I don't think we give up on anybody.

Mr. Tancredo. No, I certainly agree with that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Kind. I thank all the witness for your testimony today. It was very enlightening.

Let me talk with Dr. Florez and Mr. Winograd. One of the things we've been focusing a lot of attention on in Congress is the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Midway through so far in this session is the huge challenge of getting quality teachers in the classroom. And over the next ten years, you're telling us that because of the impending retirement boom that's going to be taking place, we're looking at anywhere from a 2 to 2.2 million teacher shortage with those retirements.

What do you think are going to be the keys, as we move forward in this area as far as attracting good people to enter the teaching profession, so that we do get the qualified teachers in the classroom that will be drastically needed in the years to come?

Dr. Florez, do you want to take the first shot?

Dr. Florez. Sure. Well, one of the things that we're looking at, and I believe it's also being done nationally, are alternative pathways. You know, we have a very traditional education program. But what we're looking at now is different ways of recruiting students like second career people. You know, someone is done with a field in accounting or and wants to move into teaching, and there is an alternative pathway, some other way of learning how to deliver content to students. So, we're looking at different career pathways.

Also, the educational assistants, you know, in the schools, retirees. One of the things that have been proposed in the state of New Mexico is looking at the retirement system and how it's set up, because many of our teachers retire, really, at a very young age. Some of them aren't ready to retire. Let's revisit how our system is set up so that maybe some teachers can retire, but still be able to get supplemental pay to continue their career in teaching.

So, I think, looking at different ways of doing business and going back to what Heather said a while ago, looking at how to color outside of those lines because there is not only way of preparing teachers. There are different paths it can take. And we're looking at that in the college. We have alternative pathways program.

But we're always real leery of that, because we're talking about quality teachers, and then all of a sudden we're talking about alternative pathways. We have to make sure that whatever alternative pathway that we put into place, that it also has the quality, and that we have the teachers being prepared to deal with all children, including the children that we're talking about here today. Because if you come from one environment, and you have no clue what it's like to come from a home where children do not have enough food, they don't have the clothes, they don't have the fancy things that maybe the teachers have been used to, or someone else has provided to them or whatever, it's very, very different. Our teachers have to really understand how to teach these children, and feel comfortable with them. I think it's the level of comfort that is also very important.

And, so, those are some of the things that can be done. I'm always real leery when I say alternative ways, and then look at the quality. I'm not saying it can't be done both ways, but we have to look at that very carefully.

Mr. Kind. Mr. Winograd, do you have any thoughts on that subject?

Mr. Winograd. As we've been thinking about the issue here in New Mexico and nationally, it's a couple of things; salaries and improving the working conditions for teachers. New Mexico ranks 47th in terms of teacher salaries, and we prepare some dynamite folks. In fact, we've got good early childhood people in the audience now. But we get cherry picked by Texas, Arizona, Colorado, and California that come and take some of our best people.

The other issue is working conditions. All of the debates about public education and all of the bashing that go on in teacher education. People say to prospective teachers, "Why would you want to do that?" We need to quit doing that. We need to honor teachers for the efforts that they make. So those are two key things.

As Dean Florez said, we think about what to do here in New Mexico in terms of improving our recruitment, our preparation, our induction, and advanced professional development. Getting more people into the profession, giving them different kinds and better preparation, and then supporting them those first two years. We lose 40 to 50 percent of our new teachers in the first two years. That's like trying to fill a bucket with a huge hole in it. Issues of dropout, issues of technology, and all of the things that are there, teachers need continued support in.

One of the good things that Washington has done, and this is a thank you to all of you, is given a Title II grant here in New Mexico for $2.4 million in part for teacher quality, that focuses on improving the recruitment, preparation, induction, and advanced professional development of teachers. So thanks for that help. It's crucial.

Chairman Hoekstra. Ms. Wilson.

Ms. Wilson. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Moises, you talked briefly at the end of your statement about Title I. You and I know that since Title I has been implemented, the achievement gap between the have and have not kids, the Anglo kids and the minority kids, has in many cases and circumstances, widened and that was not what Title I was for.

You mentioned changes to Title I. If you had your magic wand and you could take the resources that we put into Title I and do things differently, what would you do?

Dr. Venegas. Probably two or three things: the first one, obviously, would be to be accountable for it. And, of course, if they start in the first week, and the fifth week, and they're still there, that's so basic. If you don't get the job done, you don't get the resources.

The other we've seen district after district. APS is not unique in this area. When we put resources, I like Chris' comment here, we always put resources in the system, the schools, or in the university, and we seldom ever put resources in the client, or in the families.

If you go to Title I, there's great family rooms and they're full of teachers. There are exceptions. We're generalizing. And if you pay for after-school programs, you get millions of dollars, and you pay teachers and administrators and school people, and a lot of people, but most of those resources don't go to the families. So I'm thinking, when you allocate resources, find a creative way of sharing those resources with those families, and those children. Try to change a little bit of that environment.

I think the other thing that I would probably think about is have you ever been to a Title I school? Since I was a director of a Teacher Corp program, some of you remember Teacher Corp, and a public school teacher, I'd say there's great teachers there. About 30 percent of the people there, sometimes good people, are not accountable for

anyone at that school. They just pull out kids from time to time. And maybe when they pull them out, it's a great "pull out" for 15 minutes, but at the end of the year, it didn't do anything. And have you ever tried to deal with teacher organizations with regard to the rights of Title I, or special education, or special whatever it might be? So I would say, rather than have the "pull outs", lower the student-teacher ratio. You know, instead of 22 to 1 or 25 to 1, lower that and pool your resources in terms of teachers dealing directly.

Also, at the end of the grading period, most Title I teachers don't have to defend whatever that child has learned or hasn't learned. There are some very creative principals sometimes they say, when the parent comes, you come here, too, but for the most part, it's the classroom teacher. So, in that sense the resources always go to the system, but when we assess the system and the people involved, if we use the medical model there's pathology, and we always say, the people that are sick are the students. But when we allocate resources, we give the resources to the doctor, in some sense.

And I'm thinking, look at it. And if I have the time, I will break it down. And it could be absolutely correct wherever we are in this country. So I'm thinking, do that shift, do that shift. We haven't done it.

Ms. Wilson. Thank you. I have one other question. I don't know if we have time to get into it, but I do want to ask Dr. Florez a question based on the research that you were talking about, Peter; high poverty schools getting the least qualified teachers and the youngest children. What can either federal and/or state governments do to change that? If, again, you had your magic wand, what kinds of things would help, so great teachers would be in the schools where there's the greatest need?

Dr. Florez. Perhaps districts really accountable for the achievement of the students. The reason I say that is because when you were saying that, I was thinking of what we're trying to do differently in the way we place our student teachers.

One of the things that Peter and I found out was that many of them go to schools that are not of high poverty level. So we began looking at different ways of starting to prepare our teachers to work with these children in a different setting. And it's been really a challenge, because some of our students are not comfortable with that. But we're preparing them so that they can gain the confidence to be able to do that.

So we began looking in-house, and working with the schools is encouraging the administrators when they do hire their teachers, to place them in other places. But if they do place them in schools as we're describing, they need to have really excellent mentors, so that these teachers can really gain from the experience of the others. And that might be one thing at the national level, to provide funding and support for mentors so that practicing teachers can work with new teachers, and provide them the skills and the knowledge base that they need.

Mr. Winograd. First, I'd like to say, I think it's important not to set up a situation where you have schools fighting each other over a small slice of the pie, because that's a no-win situation for everybody.

I believe the key thing is to increase the number of high-quality teachers. If I had a magic wand, and I could have one thing, I would love to have more of the kinds of loans that I can go out and recruit high-quality people into teaching with and say, "If you

go into high-need areas", and I'm talking areas like special education and bilingual, "and you go into high-need education", I'm talking about inner-city Albuquerque or up in the northwest part of New Mexico, "here is money for going through school." "And if you teach in those areas for a while, then you don't have to pay the loans back." That kind of support would be so helpful to us.

We have such a need for bilingual teachers in this state, Spanish, English, Navajo, all of the languages that we have, and there are a lot of educational assistants, primarily minority women, that would make dynamite teachers. They have the experience, they come from the communities, they know the kids, but they need some financial support and our ability to provide some financial incentives and support for folks to come into those high-need areas. I'll be looking for that in the mail in the next couple of months, I hope. That's my address!

Chairman Hoekstra. Thank you. I have just a couple of comments.

This has been a very, very helpful, insightful panel. I think we accept that all children can learn. I don't think there's any dispute. This Committee has gone to some of the roughest neighborhoods in America. We've seen some excellent things, some great kids learning, and I think there's a bipartisan willingness to educate every child in America. And without getting into motives as to why, or who wants what, I think the thing that we recognize is there's a moral issue and we owe every child the opportunity to learn.

And then there's an economic issue, if you want to get into another level. That for every child that falls behind, we as a society, pay a tremendous cost for that. So I think that we recognize every child can learn, and that there is a willingness to educate every child, and that makes me a little bit concerned about developing the political will, because I think the political will is there. I think it's there in Washington, I think it's there at the state level, and I think, in most places we've gone to, it's at the local and the parental level.

I think nationally, we recognize that early development is key. There's a great program in Detroit that focuses on kids in the first two years of their lives, saying, if we don't feed them and they don't get the right nutrients and the right diet in the first couple of years, a significant portion of their brain never develops. So I think we're trying to focus on that.

Peter, I think what you said was we've seen programs around the country that are successful, but we don't know how to take them to scale. What that means is we see a great program in Chicago, or we see one in the Bronx, or maybe we'll see or hear about one in New Mexico, and we say, "Man, that really works." "How do we take it to scale," because every community is slightly different?

I mean the issue, as I read the background notes, for New Mexico is the high percentage of minority students that you have. You're not the minority. You're the majority. So it's a different problem or a different issue here in New Mexico than it is in New York.

I'm wondering, do any of you see a need for additional research resources available to you on a national basis? You could say, here are the dynamics of inner-city

Albuquerque, here are similar communities with per pupil spending, the demographics or whatever, and you know, here are the programs that they have implemented. Here's what's worked for them and here's what has not worked, so you can access those resources and perhaps shorten our learning curve. Is that information that's available, or is that something that you'd really appreciate having?

Mr. Winograd. I'll speak to that. First, it's absolutely information that we'd appreciate having, and there are all kinds of research.

And since we're talking about successful programs, one of the things that are most helpful to all of us is to have immediate access to what successful programs are around the country that we can look at and then tailor to here. And that's the kind of thing that is very, very useful; clearinghouses.

Chairman Hoekstra. Is that information readily available today, or not?

Mr. Winograd. It is in some areas, and it's not in others.

Chairman Hoekstra. Because I mean that's one of the visions that I have for education. It really becomes a clearinghouse of programs and attempts around the country to go after the most systemic problems that you can then learn from. But I do believe that you have to tailor every program to fit your own community. You can't find two of the same.

Dr. Florez. One of the things to add to that in relationship is the cost. You know, like these programs that are successful, how much did it actually cost to do it?

Chairman Hoekstra. Right.

Dr. Florez. Cost analysis. Look at it across the country, teacher quality programs, and teacher preparation programs. What Peter and I have been trying to find out is, how much does it actually cost to have a "teacher preparation program"? It's been really difficult getting that. People have different programs here and there, but we can't really get that.

We've done it for ourselves with monitor-ship programs and partnership programs with schools that tell us there are particular factors that are critical to the preparation of our teachers. So we're trying to take all of our programs for teacher preparation up to scale, and it's costly.

Chairman Hoekstra. Yes, because I think the resources are there. We have a tremendous amount of money in Washington. We spend a lot of money, and there's nothing more frustrating than for us to look at our own Capital, which is the only school district that the four of us have any direct impact on. You would love the amount of money that we put into Washington, D.C. schools. We put in over $10,000 per student. Wow! I'm from Michigan; we say "wow." But the problem is, we get disappointing results.

It's still one of the poorest, or if not the poorest, school district of any school district in the country. We struggle to determine if it is an issue of making it $12,000. Should it be $13,000, should it be $14,000, or are some other issues going on here that

are not just the issue of money?

Dr. Venegas. Just a point, then, on the replication of successful programs. I think it is easy to replicate and move programs, but here again, it's not the program. I think what you find in those programs is a high sense of passion, you find a high sense of commitment, you find a high sense of involvement of people, and a different kind of attitude.

So to transfer that is not about details, I don't think. And it's not that they don't know, and not the information that you don't have, but in some parts of this country, they still don't have that sense of passion that it's going to happen.

You could literally package the 100 most successful programs, put them on the Web and distribute them to everyone, and you would still have to work with the people on attitudes that we have in terms of who can and cannot learn. And I think you're right, I think we've made some steps, I think we're going in that direction. To be very honest with you, we have no choice, because the faces are different. So if we don't educate those faces, they're the majority. So in some sense, let's move.

Chairman Hoekstra. There's no choice.

Dr. Rivera, I know you've got a comment, but we've got another panel, and Christine's been passing me notes for the last half hour saying, we've got to move, move, move. If you've got some additional comments or questions, please feel free to submit them to the panel. We'll review them, and put them in the record.

We're going to take about a five-minute break and get ready for the next panel, but for the seven of you, thank you very much for being here and providing some stimulating testimony.

[The Subcommittee breaks for five minutes.]

Chairman Hoekstra. One of the reasons we take breaks is that's kind of like job security.

Someone has given me a suggestion of a very successful school in Washington, D.C., that we ought to go take a look at and maybe see if we can't implement that in other places in Washington, D.C. We know that there are good schools in Washington, D.C., doing some very good things. But it's a very specific suggestion, and I'm not sure if she's here yet or not, but thank you for that.

We also had an opportunity to talk to some of the representatives of the Native American community that gave us some information that they'd like for us to follow up on. We're going to follow up with Congresswoman Wilson on that over the next couple of months. And then there was also a member of the audience who encouraged us to not only look at the issue of dropouts, but also to take a look at the issue of "push-outs."

And so that's why we go out. We don't have all the answers in Washington, and we come out and when we do the hearings around the country, we see a different panel than what we would see in Washington, and we also see a different audience than what we see in Washington. And some of you are frustrated witnesses, and many would love to have had the opportunity to come and testify, and since you can't testify you catch us during the breaks and say, "Why didn't you do this," and we say, "Hey, we hadn't thought of it, and we will think about it and we'll put it on our agenda as something that we need to take a look at."

So for the members of the audience who made those kinds of comments, we've captured them and we will take a look and put them as part of our process. With that, I will turn it back over to Mrs. Wilson for introducing our second panel.

Mrs. Wilson. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to introduce the second panel that's focusing on the issue of alternatives and things that work with kids, and how we attack this dropout problem when kids are a little bit older.

Joe Vigil is the Associate Superintendent at Albuquerque Public Schools who is responsible for this problem. Joe has also been very helpful in educating and helping me understand what works, what doesn't work, and how we can best achieve as a community.

Mr. Alan Marks is a teacher in the Albuquerque Public Schools who is interested in starting a charter school for our underprivileged kids. Looking at Albuquerque Public Schools, Mr. Marks is an articulate advocate, and another guy who's coloring outside of the boxes.

Mr. Roger Cox has a real estate development company and is helping to finance and develop a charter school in the East Mountains. It probably is unusual to find a successful real estate man who has an interest and background in education, maybe not, but he's quick to point out he's not the expert on education. But he believes that the East Mountains need a high school, and when the Albuquerque Public Schools kept turning down the East Mountain community, he got behind the charter school movement. He's involved in getting that charter school started. He knows the height of the hurdles facing him, and we've asked him to speak here as a prospective businessman who's committed to making this work for the community.

Captain Craig McClure is a Danforth fellow at UNM and he's also with the Sierra Alternative Program here in Albuquerque, which is where I first met him in his classroom, trying and successfully inspiring his students to achieve and to stay in school. I look forward to hearing from him and hearing about his Danforth fellowship.

And finally, Mrs. G.P. Joslin and Geoff Joslin. Geoff was injured and was away from school for an extended period of time. He was told that he had to wait out a semester before he could return to class. And his mom was determined to get Geoff back into a formal learning environment, and found the Sierra Alternative Program. Geoff's been doing great at Sierra, and we're going to hear about his experiences today. And I promise that if anybody up here gives you any trouble, just give me the high sign and I'll take care of it.

Chairman Hoekstra. Before we begin, I want to give special thanks to the New Mexico Technical Vocational Institute. They've taken great care and given us a great facility. They've also provided us with Coke, and I think we may start a new Congressional tradition. They've also provided us with lunch, which for some of us is consisting of a bowl of M&Ms.

Mr. Kind. Their way of sweetening us up, I think.

Chairman Hoekstra. That's right, but thanks for the great hospitality here at the Vocational Institute, and here in New Mexico.

Mr. Vigil.

STATEMENT OF DR. JOSEPH VIGIL, ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT, ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOOLS, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Mr. Vigil. Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to speak before you today. As a representative of the Albuquerque Public Schools, I would like to start off by saying that even though we are the 25th largest urban school district in the country, we are very successful in many ways in that our test scores are above the state average, and even though we get maligned in many different ways because of our dropout issue, which is a significant problem in this district, there are some very positive things that are occurring within our district.

We have taken the opportunity with this new push for accountability to embrace that challenge. We have never been afraid of it. Since the 1800s when free public education was first made available, public school systems have opened their doors to a very diverse student population, and in our attempts to meet the needs of a very diverse student population, we have provided quite a bit of different construction for students to learn.

What has been fairly recent in this era of accountability, is that it's no longer good enough to provide opportunities for students. We now must make sure they are learning. Because in days that have since passed, students who did not get high school diplomas had many opportunities in careers and viable areas for employment. Now, students cannot be successful in our community without that high school diploma.

But the road to dropping out doesn't start when a child reaches high school. This is actually a long road, and a child goes through quite a significant process in making a decision to drop out. This is an emotional struggle that takes place over several years that festers and grows like a cancer until the child finally makes that critical decision.

And though the struggles they go through are similar, the reasons students quit school can be very different. Some students don't like school, or are having trouble getting along with others, including teachers and classmates. Other factors include a

history of truancy, suspensions, sometimes because they don't keep up with their classmates and become discouraged and drop out of school. Other students have employment responsibilities. So there's a tremendous demand for school assistance to provide support for students because it isn't just about students learning how to read. It's also about providing the kind of support systems that allow children to feel successful, for them to learn how to get along with a very diverse student population, and, also, students making a commitment to attend school regularly.

A recent study was completed that indicated that students spend about 24 hours a week in front of the television, and less than eight hours a week doing their homework. So, in many ways, students have a responsibility to attend to the work at hand.

Parents have a responsibility, also, and part of the challenge for a school is how to make or engage parents in this process, through collaboration, and their own education helping them become well informed about student issues, nutrition and child development.

We have about 12,000 hours available for instruction in the student's K through 12 academic life. Currently we use about 75 percent of that time well for students who are high achieving, and about 50 percent of that instruction time well for students who are low achieving. We have a lot of work to do to increase the quality of instruction that occurs during those 12,000 hours available.

Some students need more than those 12,000 hours, so we need to dramatically increase extended learning opportunities, on Saturday and after school so students will be able to benefit and achieve academically.

Does that mean my time is up?

Chairman Hoekstra. You've actually got until the red. Oh, there you go.

Mr. Vigil. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DR. JOSEPH VIGIL, ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT, ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO – SEE APPENDIX I

Chairman Hoekstra. Thank you. Can we just go right down the line, or do you want to go in the order that you were introduced? We'll go to Mr. Cox, if that's fine with Mr. Marks.

STATEMENT OF ROGER COX, PRESIDENT, ROGER COX & ASSOCIATES, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Mr. Cox. I was well introduced. Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, I'm a little disappointed that the people that I brought to applaud for me have gone.

Chairman Hoekstra. We'll do it.

Mr. Cox. I was raised on the Navajo reservation, and I went to most of my elementary school with my brother and I being the Anglos and the rest of them being Navajo kids. And I don't know what's happened to all the rest of them, but I went on to get a degree in education. Some of the concerns that I heard earlier fit with the reason I got out of education because it didn't pay me a living. And I think that's sad, that our educators have that problem.

So, anyway, we're building a high school on the east side of the Sandias. We did a lot of things trying to get schools to be interested in that. Their criterion doesn't allow anything under 1,500 to 2,000 students, and in my opinion, that's not a viable thing. I see some of the big schools with some of their many problems, and so we're going to have a student body of a maximum of 500 kids.

We will start out with 100 kids in the 9th grade, and then we will add a grade a year until it's a full high school. The problems that we have encountered in this are being able to finance the structures. The only way we can do it, probably, is to pay a premium for the money, getting it from people that will loan that money at high interest rates with a lot of points on the front end, and so on. So we probably will have to finance it ourselves, and somebody probably will have to sign the paper. The banks don't like to loan it without that.

Another thing that we encountered, which is very difficult, is that they put a prepayment penalty in the mortgage if you get it with some of these institutions. And that's not an acceptable thing, because if the school grows or whatever, you've got a big cost to change that mortgage. So those are some of the problems that we've encountered.

We've had the land donated, so we have a good base. We can get the community to be involved in a lot of the construction. We've got a heavy-duty construction company that will go in and do the heavy dirt work for us, and that type of thing. So it's a community situation.

And in talking with Heather, it seems that one of the places that might be most beneficial is if the Federal Government could in some way help in the financing area: low interest rates, that type of thing. We feel that there are a lot of good people on the committee that I'm on, and they've done a great deal of individual work. That's the thing that we think will make this successful, because the parents will be very deeply involved in the school.

So that's basically where we're coming from. Come on, red.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ROGER COX, PRESIDENT, ROGER COX & ASSOCIATES, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO – SEE APPENDIX J

Chairman Hoekstra. Two for two, I'm pretty impressed. Mr. Cox. You can have my time. Either that, or we've got the thing calibrated now.

Mr. Marks.

STATEMENT OF J. ALAN MARKS, EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANT, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Mr. Marks. Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, Mrs. Wilson. Welcome to New Mexico.

I taught from 1978 to 1992 in a very poor, large high school, about 85 percent minority. That really doesn't make any sense, does it? It's not really a minority at 85 percent? Approximately, I would say, 55 percent of the students drop out, and it's a school where maybe 10 percent of those who begin high school go to a four-year college and maybe 4 percent finish.

In my written remarks, I address something that you were asking for in the last panel, and that was a bit of an insight into two systemic issues that cause dropouts. The first of those really has to do with the way too large impersonal high school as a unit for teaching and learning. The second has to do with the fuzziness of our educational goals. Without the clarity of what they're trying to achieve, students become confused, often bored, and sometimes hopeless about their education.

To address both of those issues, and many more, we decided to launch a model that we hope will help everyone in the state see what can be done with high school education. I won't have time to address the second of these systemic goals. We can talk about it in Q and A, or you can just read my comments.

The first, however, is very instructive, and I would like to invite you into the world that I inhabited for those 14 years. To start out, let's just picture a day in the school. There's about 2,500 students, 200 staff, and I'm a ninth grade English teacher. A person walks into my first period class, we meet and I become very interested in this student; however, I know nothing about what the student is doing for the rest of the day.

And then, you know, go ahead two or three years. I still have not seen this student again. The student does not see me again. I am not in her life again in a meaningful way just because of the nature of the beast, of the large, impersonal high school. So what kind of a caring environment does that provide for the student?

A student can get lost in that environment and doesn't have mentors that they can necessarily look to. You can imagine, as they begin to fall behind, as they begin to get confused, as they begin to feel pressures, as other things in their lives begin to impinge on their schooling, that a lot of times, in that kind of large environment where they don't feel like people are there for them; people that they have developed trust with over years. I think a lot of them decide that this just must not be the best way to do it, and they drop out.

I think it's broken, right?

Chairman Hoekstra. You've got time. Keep going.

Mr. Marks. It hasn't had time to be green yet.

From the perspective of a teacher, all of us want very much to have some kind of meaningful way to guide our students and to make sure that their problems and their needs are addressed, but again, we frequently don't have a chance to find out what's happening to them for the rest of their day in their other classes. We may have meetings within our own department, and some of us don't, but we rarely talk across departments. So we're very frustrated, as well, because we're not able to be the kind of agents that we try to be in this process.

Maybe what I'll do is, since I'm going to the same place that Mr. Cox went with his comments, let me refer to my written comments just for about a page. In our charter high school, for example, we'll have a small core of teachers who escort students all the way through their high school experience. We can anticipate problems and deal with them quickly and thoroughly. We can keep parents informed about any inconsistencies because we work daily with these students throughout the 4 years.

Each student will have a personal learning plan similar to the IEP that you're familiar with for special education, so that each student's special needs, traditions, care, concern, rates of learning and abilities will be acknowledged and can be dealt with because we are small. We can have high standards for all, but can chart improvement in such a way as to make low-achieving students feel challenged and self-confident about their progress.

Essentially, we form a school family that is consistent, coherent, and caring. We gain our coherence because, as a small school, we meet and plan together daily. Our curriculum is thematically linked so that a real world problem which students can get their teeth into gives meaning to abstractions such as math or social studies. Students who feel acknowledged, encouraged and cared for are much more likely to stay in school and experience academic success. And I attribute most of this success to a human scale, a small school.

So that raises the problems addressed by Mr. Cox. What are the constraints that keep these useful pilots and alternative schools from being as effective as they should be? The primary constraints which all of us in this state have found for charter schools is that we lack a facility. Unless there's an empty school building around, we're confronted with a terrible dilemma. Assuming we can even find a facility to lease, should we use a huge chunk of our operational budget to pay for that lease, and then with our correspondingly reduced budget render inferior services to our students? And what about the long-term?

As long as we continue to pay for our lease and operational expenses, we'll never have a chance to create the permanent facility that truly embodies our dream as a charter.

In our case, in the poor barrio where we're locating, there really aren't any suitable buildings that we could even afford to renovate to lease except in distant strip malls, and even those would be well beyond our means to renovate. We'll end up leasing portable buildings, hoping to find a site with infrastructure for hookups. We think we may be able to partner with the county for the use of a vacant site across from a community center, but what do we do for the long-term?

We're a poor community, and, as you're well aware, we have no authority to float a bond to raise capital for a building. What we need to find, and you might consider recommending, is some source of funds for loans for capital improvements. Our community, though poor in wealth, is rich in enthusiasm and commitment. They are willing to put in thousands of hours to make this alternative public high school a reality, but the limiting factor is access to capital. Please consider a resolution of this issue as one significant path to improve student retention and achievement that your Committee could propose. Thank you.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF J. ALAN MARKS, EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANT, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO – SEE APPENDIX K

Chairman Hoekstra. Thanks. Captain McClure.

STATEMENT OF CAPTAIN J. CRAIG McCLURE, DANFORTH FELLOW, UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO, SIERRA ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Captain McClure. I thank the Committee and especially Mrs. Wilson for having me here today, and the Joslin family, as well. And my hat is off to your staff that logistically helped us a great deal in getting to this point.

I'm here primarily to speak to the importance of providing alternative schooling opportunities to our young citizens. Common sense dictates the far-reaching and dramatic ways that our society has changed in the last 40 years are having significant impact on public education. To meet the demands of these changes, our schools must change to keep pace. One of the most effective tools to meet our taxpayers' expectations is a community-oriented alternative school.

These schools lower the dropout rate and save at-risk students who might otherwise fall through the cracks of society seemingly stuck in an intensely competitive ultra-fast paced mode. Most of our alternative students are unable to effectively operate in a large impersonal environment, as one would most likely find at city high schools. By creating a classroom and a campus that is small and personal, we as the staff are able to provide a more individualistic service to these students than our larger schools can.

The reasons that young people find themselves grasping at alternative programs as their last hope are as complex and multifaceted as our society itself. There are, however, some common factors in making an alternative school successful. What follows is, in my experience, the five most important factors: design a flexible school with a small teacher/pupil ratio because traditional scheduling cannot meet the needs of many of today's high school students or parents; make the students accountable with a well-defined framework of understood expectations and boundaries because discipline is not a dirty word, it is both necessary and welcomed by the students; create a culture of community by involving the families and neighbors of the school and its students; foster a sense of belonging and an atmosphere that reflects and produces quality of character, self-discipline, self-denial, and most importantly, respect and love for others; and, the curriculum should stress academics and reasoning skills based on building a portfolio of tools that students see as realistic and applicable, thereby enhancing their employability and success in life.

Now, I would feel remiss were I not to address the main reasons our schools are not meeting the expectations of our citizenry. These are my personal beliefs. They don't represent the official point of view of APS, the University of New Mexico, or my school. We, as educators, can only do so much. We cannot repair the entire fabric of a society that has been torn in many directions. Parents have the primary responsibility to create successful students and respectable members of their community. Our job as teachers is to help families educate and guide children, not to raise them. Can anyone deny that the permissive and subdivided society we have today is not an integral part of these students' problems?

The music, the video games, the movies and the news glorifies and embellishes violence, drugs and reckless narcissism, while desensitizing young people to others' suffering with barbaric and irresponsible messages. Many parents are confused by a contradictory legal system that holds them civilly responsible for their children's misbehavior, but that threatens criminal punishment if they take disciplinary steps themselves.

What you, as legislators and representatives can do is stop and reconsider with great care prior to passing yet another fallacious law. Don't give in to knee-jerk reactions when the press sensationalizes school violence, creating yet another law restricting the rights of honest citizens.

For instance, knowing full well that young people have had access to guns since the founding of this Nation, ask instead what has changed to produce such uncivilized and irresponsible behavior in our youth.

Take the press and the popular media to task, rather than letting them set the pace, tone and direction of our government.

Lastly, do away with the ever-expanding Federal behemoth, whenever possible. Red tape entangles the hundreds of grants coming out of Washington, D.C. Help us by cutting away that red tape, ridding us of the bureaucrats that administer them, and leave it up to the individual states to administer those funds as they see fit.

And I would ask you to take this back to the Capitol. I hope all the Members of Congress, residents of the White House, and every political person in a position of power and public trust become more aware of their own responsibilities as role models. Each time our students observe corruption, poor character and dishonest behavior by the leaders of this Nation, it makes it that much harder as teachers to instill an ethical standard in America's next generation of citizens.

In 1816, Thomas Jefferson said, "If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be." No one can deny and let no one forget the tremendous and valiant efforts by teachers to educate and prepare students for their future, despite dangerous work environments and embarrassingly low pay. If we sacrifice some of our individual pursuits and come together as communities, churches, neighbors and families, there is nothing that we cannot accomplish. Thank you once again.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF CAPTAIN J. CRAIG McCLURE, DANFORTH FELLOW, UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO, SIERRA ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO
SEE APPENDIX L

Chairman Hoekstra. Geoff. Welcome. Relax.

STATEMENT OF GEOFF JOSLIN, STUDENT, SIERRA ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Mr. Joslin. First of all, I'd like to thank you for letting me have this opportunity to speak, and I guess I'll tell you my story. I was one of the kids that were going to slip through the cracks and become a high school dropout statistic.

In the fall of 1998, I had broken my foot, and because of the pain medication, I was unable to go to school for a while. I also kind of slacked off and did my own thing. To top it all off, my family was going through some rough times. My school told me I was going to be on long-term suspension, and couldn't go back until the new semester started in January.

I knew then, if I had that long of a time off, I would never go back. My girlfriend also, at that time, had told me she would never date a dropout, and my parents really wanted me to stay in school. Finally, my counselor said, "There is a program that can help you, but it only works if you want it to." I said I'd give it a shot.

I started in Mr. McClure's Fresh Start Program and realized it was more disciplined, same work, stricter attendance, and the work was more challenging, but I had a flexible schedule. It enabled me to get a part-time job to help my family. It seemed easier for me because I knew all the teachers and you can ask them for help any time, but it was rarely ever needed because of the more one-on-one teaching. It also gave me a credit for my part-time job.

If it weren't for the program at Sierra and the people, I wouldn't be in front of you today. We need alternative schooling. I speak for the kids that need something and want to graduate. Thank you.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF GEOFF JOSLIN, STUDENT, SIERRA ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO
SEE APPENDIX M

Chairman Hoekstra. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF G.P. JOSLIN, MOTHER, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Mrs. Joslin. I'm G.P. Joslin, Geoff's mom. I've been in the Albuquerque Public School system for about 13 years with my two sons. My oldest son graduated in 1999. Geoff was still at Sierra; he's a junior. He started at Fresh Start Program last year because of a few too many absences, and like he said, he'd severely broken his foot in five places, and it was coupled with a family crisis.

He wasn't really motivated for school at that time. When his school informed me that he would have to leave and not start again until January, it really wasn't going to work for me. When you give a kid, any kid that kind of time off they don't want to go back. I couldn't let that happen. His high school counselor said there was one last resort, the Fresh Start Program. He said it was for kids that have had too many absences for ditching or for family crisis, whatever it might be.

We had a conference with the Fresh Start people, and they decided Geoff could be accepted in the program, but no tolerance on ditching, unexcused absences or anything. Geoff did well in the program. He connected with a few great teachers and got caught up on his credits, and, like he said, he got a part-time job.

He continued to work all summer long, but when the new school year started, Geoff didn't want to go back to the 2,000 plus regular high school. He felt he didn't get the attention that he got at Fresh Start. He told me he would rather drop out of school. I couldn't have that. That's, like, no way. I was even willing to compromise.

I told him, "Geoff, get your GED." Didn't have a problem with that. But then he told me, "Mr. McClure said I could go back." I said, "Are you sure, because you're not a fresh start any more? It's a one-time thing." He said, "Mom, let's call Mr. McClure."

I called Mr. McClure; he said, "Yes, we'll take Geoff back if it means saving him from, GED or dropping out." So Geoff took him up on his offer. Geoff goes to school; he's challenged; he does well.

Alternative schools are a key to the future of some of our kids. So many of our kids are falling through the cracks. We have to have a system or a way for these kids. A lot of kids do want to graduate, and they do want to finish school. We have to help them achieve this.

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF G. P. JOSLIN, MOTHER, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO – SEE APPENDIX N

Chairman Hoekstra. Thank you. Mr. Tancredo.

Mr. Tancredo. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

What we have heard here is encouraging from a number of standpoints. I also want to make you all aware of something, and that is that the Congress did pass, in 1998, the Charter School Expansion Act, and with it comes some significant funding. There's an increase in fiscal year 2000. If you're not aware of how you could participate in this, and grants you could get, I'll give you a telephone number right now, which you might want to write down, 202/225-6558. A staff member on the Committee can help you.

Anyway, it has expanded the use of the money that's available through the Federal program, and it's to encourage what we see as a very positive development in education alternatives. And that's, of course, what you've been talking about here.

Now, it's intriguing to me that a there's common sense in the way we describe alternatives to the present system, when we see the present system not working all that well, considering that we have as much opposition to this as we do. In order to really deal with it effectively, I think all of us are going to have to be candid as to why that opposition exists, exactly what it is and what we can do about it.

I notice that New Mexico has been moving ahead with the passage of its own legislation, expanding the number of charter schools that are allowed from five, I think was the original number, to maybe 100 now. That's a great, great step in the right

direction, but it's a little bit late, you know. This movement for school choice, I'm going to use words that I know are highly charged here, but in fact that's really what we're talking about. We're talking about giving parents the ability to choose among a wide variety of educational options for their kids, and we're talking about giving kids the ability to make that same choice when it is appropriate.

But we all know that this is a slow, sometimes agonizingly slow process. I'd like to hear from you, in the most candid way possible, what you believe to be the obstacles we can deal with, on a Federal level especially, that prevent a faster flow toward true school choice and a wide, wide variety of programs and options.

Mr. Cox. Well, it seems to me there was a thing on television a couple of nights ago, one was for charter schools, one's for choice, and the other one was on the state education committee or whatever. And as I was sitting there, it appeared to me that the only thing the fellow that was working for the schools at the time was job security. It just seemed to me that all he was afraid of was, if this happened, he might not have a job.

Mr. Tancredo. How candid. Anybody else? Mr. Vigil.

Mr. Vigil. Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, I think that oftentimes, we interchange the word "choice" and "quality" and don't make a distinction, and in this era of accountability, it is not just choice we're talking about, it is the quality of education. Whether it's public school education or private school education or charter school education, it doesn't matter, but we interchange the two words like they mean the same thing.

Public school systems, like Albuquerque Public Schools, are charged right now with making sure students are learning. And our opposition isn't to choice. What we'd like if we're going to be held accountable, is that others should be held accountable for the same thing, student learning. That's a challenge we all face. Whether it's an alternative outside of our system or within our system, and if it contributes to students graduating and being successful, that's what we're all in this for. There's enough work for all of us to do, so we don't have to worry about the "pull-outs" there, because there is plenty of work.

So I guess I would just caution the choice of words, because oftentimes we think when we talk about choice, we're also talking about quality, and they're two very distinct and two very different definitions.

Mr. Tancredo. Don't you think that one develops out of the other? Don't you think greater quality develops out of more choice?

Mr. Vigil. I think it's actually the other way around, probably.

Mr. Tancredo. Fewer choices, develops more quality?

Mr. Vigil. I'm not sure. I'm not sure of your question.

I don't think choices necessarily lead to quality. Choices lead to choices, and depending what people would like out of an education. But right now, we need to make sure that our young children are liable for the economy and being educated enough to

take on the world of work and higher education. Often, the choice doesn't offer that guarantee.

So the development of rigorous standards that every child can attain is very important. With this development of standards holding every school, whether it's a public school or whether it's a charter school, or any other kind of school, to that same standard, with the success of the school based on students obtaining that standard over time.

Mr. Tancredo. What would the failure result in? What would the failure of a school that did not live up to the standard, what would happen to that school, do you think? What should happen?

Mr. Vigil. The result would be the kinds of things that are happening right now, not only across the country, but also in the State of New Mexico. As I started off my comments, you know, we have students who are very successful in the system. About 66 percent of our students are very successful. Now, we have a large percentage of students who are not successful, but the state has recently adopted a methodology by which schools that have not met a standard are put on school improvement. There should be sanctions placed on schools, over time, which are not meeting the needs of students.

Those same kinds of sanctions should be placed on any school where the students are not making the kinds of gains we would expect. But the quality of school isn't just on the test scores of that student population. The quality of the school is how those test scores are rising over time. Because if you get a student who can read well when they come in and can read well when they leave, that does not necessarily mean that's a good school. So it's important to look at a trend line of student progress, and oftentimes we make the mistake of assuming that a school is good because their test scores are good, and that's not necessarily true.

Mr. Kind. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Again, I want to thank each of you for your testimony here today. Geoff, since you're the only student we've had a chance to listen to, I want to ask you a couple of questions. You did a wonderful job in your testimony, by the way.

Mr. Joslin. Thank you.

Mr. Kind. Is there a certain image to going to an alternative school program, like the Sierra Alternative Program that you're involved with now? Does it carry any kind of stigma by going to a school like that with friends that you may have or friends that are still in the public school system that are thinking of dropping out?

Mr. Joslin. Well, actually, I have friends from all over the city, and I have friends in all different kinds of schools and everything. What I tend to find is that either I'm doing better than them or we're doing about the same. I wouldn't say that I'm better than anybody, but I would say that I get more of the one-on-one teaching that I need, and I know that I need that for myself.

Mr. Kind. Well, that was the other question I was going to ask you. What are you receiving in the Fresh Start Program that you're in right now that you're responding to

that you weren't necessarily receiving in the old school?

Mr. Joslin. Well, actually, I'm in the regular education right now, and I'm experiencing more economics, more English, and we get more hands on, I guess, as opposed to last year. It seems to be working with me.

Mr. Kind. It seems like you've developed a pretty close relationship with Mr. McClure here. Is that safe to assume?

Mr. Joslin. Yeah. Well, I've had him for 2 years straight now.

Mr. Kind. Has that been an important part of it, being able to make that connection with the teacher?

Mr. Joslin. Actually, it seems like the teachers there try to make a connection with all of the students. It just seems that I made my connection sooner than some other people, I guess.

Mr. Kind. What's the ratio of students that you work with?

Captain McClure. Are you talking about the student/teacher ratio? Probably average is fourteen to one in regular education.

The fact that Geoff said that teachers make a concerted effort in an alternative school setting to make a connection with students, it's not just there. Mr. Marks put it well. I did teach in a regular setting where I had, in one case, 42 kids. You'll want to make a connection, you'd really love to make a connection, but you just can't. Not with that many kids.

And you're looking at taking home 200 plus papers and staying up until 2:30or 3:00 in the morning trying to give them quality feedback on their papers, and it becomes a situation that is untenable.

Mr. Kind. Would the lower class ratios help the discipline in the classroom, as well?

Captain McClure. I think that, in many cases, it would. I think that discipline also rests on the shoulders of the administrators and teachers themselves, as well as, of course, the accountability of the students and how they behave in a class. They know what's right, and they know what's wrong.

Mr. Kind. Mrs. Joslin, you certainly seem to be a parent who is very concerned about your child's education, and your son, and how well he's going to do. What factors do you attribute to the fact that Geoff was slipping through the cracks, that he was on the verge of dropping out, and it seemed to horrify you when he was suggesting that?

Mrs. Joslin. I don't know. It might have been just a personal thing. a family crisis thing.

Geoff was an honor student in eighth grade, and he hit high school with 2,000 kids. I think it was the size of the school. Geoff wasn't interested. It was like they don't care what you're doing. You turn in a paper; you don't turn in a paper. I just don't know that he hit a connection with any of these teachers ninth grade year. And it just fell apart

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after that for him, I think.

I just couldn't have him not graduate or get his diploma. My father was 45 before he got his GED and my mother has a ninth grade education. I just didn't want that for my sons. If it meant me hanging out at the schools with him, I was willing to do that.

I could do that in elementary school. I was very involved in elementary school. I was a real mom 5 years running for one or the other boy, you know. I loved when they were in elementary school, I got to go again, and I loved it. I was able to do that. But once they hit middle school, they don't want as many parents in the classroom, and they don't want as much help. And I understood that. It was hard for me. I had that umbilical cord cutting going on. They didn't want me there.

In high school, they still want parents to be involved, but not necessarily in the classrooms. And I think, to a certain extent maybe, we still need parental involvement in classrooms. When Geoff was in fourth grade, I used to take three kids out into the hall, and the teacher was in there, she had four kids that just could not read. I got to read to them. That made my day. It's what we did for 30 minutes. They would talk about different stories, different books, and I think it made their day. I don't know. I just think that had an impact on me. And if reading for 30 minutes to three or four kids can make a difference to them staying in school and staying motivated, even in fourth grade, I'm willing to do that. I'd do that for anybody's kids.

I just feel we need to do something. It's sad that so many kids are sitting at home playing video games when they could have an education and some kind of a life. What do you do when you turn 19 and you still don't have a life or a direction. You need to make a connection, whether it's with your own kids or other people's kids. There are plenty of people out there trying to help.

Mr. Kind. Do I have time for one more question or do we need to move on?

Chairman Hoekstra. Go ahead.

Mr. Kind. Thank you. Trying to follow up with regard to the infrastructures, the building of new facilities, improving of existing facilities or even the addition of existing facilities. Since there is a demonstrated need here in the State of New Mexico, why haven't you been getting more support at the state or local level as far as coming up with the funds that you feel need to be done?

Just to put this into perspective, the Federal Government distributes roughly 7 percent of the entire education budget throughout the country. So there's a very limited role that the Federal Government plays, and yet infrastructure needs in particular have historically been a state and local responsibility.

Now, there is legislation pending. Representative Charlie Rangel from New York is pushing legislation to call for a tax credit on bonding issues at local school districts that the administration is very supportive of, but what's happening that this isn't getting done?

Mr. Cox. I think part of it is the fact that this is a new approach in the State, and there's a misunderstanding or a lack of knowledge as to how to move these things forward. I think that's one of the big problems. We made a presentation, and they just threw it out. And

so I think that's one of the problems. We just don't have enough experience on the state level to administer this.

Mr. Marks. Mr. Kind, under the startup stimulus fund monies that are available in the State of New Mexico, even though they're limited, they can be used to renovate buildings and to do infrastructure improvements, lease property, or if we happen to have something donated. We're talking about charter schools throughout the United States. The main issue for all of them is getting a facility, and they don't have the ability to raise the capital to do that. So I think New Mexico is trying to do its part, but it's simply an issue that has not been adequately addressed yet.

Mr. Kind. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mrs. Wilson. I'd like to kind of follow up on the same line of questioning. We all know that we've got $1.2 billion backlog in the State of New Mexico for capital improvements, and the charter school law here is only a year old, so we're kind of learning our way a little bit. But, Roger, you've been in the real estate business and you're probably the only one in the room who understands a lot of this stuff with respect to capital funding and things. Have you ever had any experience with any of the other Federal loan guarantee programs, and which ones, from an administrative point of view, work and which ones don't? How would you structure such a thing?

Mr. Cox. Well, I've been involved very much in private schools. I represented the Academy in all that land that they sold out there. And there's, of course, no Federal connection or state connection to that school. I don't have any experience whatsoever with capital funding on a Federal basis. I get too impatient. You guys in Washington don't come through fast enough.

Mrs. Wilson. Alan, have you looked at this issue at all as far as how a loan guarantee program would best be administered or do you have any thoughts at all on that?

Mr. Marks. Well, the only thoughts that I've had on it so far are that certain basic principles that the Federal Government would want to see observed, and the school would certainly have to commit to those. For example, there is the possibility that charter schools could easily be used wrongfully, and in my opinion, to defeat diversity and socio-economically segregate society. I would hope that that didn't happen and I would hope that the loan guarantee programs would certainly not foster or favor that, as one example.

But I do know that there are a lot of guarantee programs, and incentive programs, and support and insurance type programs that the Federal Government has in all kinds of other arenas of life. If this could be one more, I think it would certainly achieve a significant benefit for society, and certainly for the alternative schools that we're talking about.

Mr. Cox. I'm on the committee that's really doing all of this. I try to take a back seat to all of that, and I have some very knowledgeable people on that committee with all kinds of funding experience and so on. I'm sure on that committee, there are people that are familiar with some of them.

Mrs. Wilson. Thank you. Just one final question for Joe.

I know that you've been focusing on this problem for a year or so now since you came back to do this work. We've got a handful of alternative schools or schools within schools here in Albuquerque. What plans does Albuquerque Public Schools have with respect to expansion of those, or what's coming, what's new, with respect just not to the prevention that we've talked about with the first panel, but the intervention with older kids?

Mr. Vigil. We've divided the work into three areas. One is prevention, second is intervention, and the third part we call recruitment, which is getting students back into a viable education system. The alternative programs we have in this district, which are pretty extensive, are designed to recruit students back in or to keep students in for a variety of reasons.

Our plans for the alternative program is that every alternative program in our system must meet rigorous standards of academic performance, because we want our students to graduate from the alternative programs, to have an education they can be proud of. So we are looking at the rigor of the academic program, but we also understand that the alternatives also provide an alternative support system that keeps our students in school. So that's one aspect that we're working on.

Second, where are the gaps in the alternatives that we currently provide? For example, right now, we don't have a place for ninth graders who have no credit or who are not enrolled in school for whatever reason. We don't have a place for them to land. So we need to develop that internally, or to work with others to develop a program for students. Ninth graders with no credit, how can they continue to get credit, but yet be prepared when they choose to go back to the rigors of a comprehensive high school? Because we don't want our alternatives to be considered watered-down programs in the area of recruitment, strengthening our alternatives and, increasing the numbers is one of our goals.

We also have a significant waiting list for students to get into alternative programs, and so we are increasing capacity in these programs. The very success of some of these programs, is because of their small size, which is an issue that has been reinforced, and also on this panel here. So when you increase capacity, it doesn't necessarily mean increasing enrollment in that school, but perhaps replicating that successful alternative so that another small school can be created.

Mrs. Wilson. Thank you.

Chairman Hoekstra. Can anybody answer the question, what's happening in the home school movement in New Mexico?

Mr. Cox. It's very high. To my understanding, there's a lot of home schooling going on, particularly on the east side of the mountains. That's one of the things that we feel is going to give the school a great enrollment is the people that have not been satisfied, want to move into another school. We're planning one teacher per fifteen students type of arrangement.

And Mr. Vigil seems to be concerned about the quality of the education. I don't think there's any question. I've got a grandson that's been in the public schools and the middle schools, and we put him into a private school, and I can tell you the difference in

his education is unbelievable. Of course, it costs $7,500 a year, and people can't afford that. But the education that that boy is getting in private school and what he was getting in the middle school can't be compared. I've always felt like middle school and high school is where we fall down in our education. I think our elementary is pretty good. But the education he's getting in that private school is 200 percent better.

Chairman Hoekstra. But the movement of home schooling is growing in the State and does anybody have any numbers as to how many students?

Mrs. Wilson. One in 10 students in New Mexico is home schooled, I believe. It's a very strong tradition in rural New Mexico. Is the private or parochial school breakdown there?

Mr. Vigil. Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, public schools conduct regular workshops for parents who are interested in home teaching their children, and we are making every attempt to provide the kind of information they need, as well as access to our system, because, for whatever reason, they choose to home school their child.

However, we don't feel that is a reason for us not support their work, because there are a number of different ways to educate a child. We respect their decision to do it in that manner. It demonstrates that when a child has a quality teacher, whether it's a charter school or a public school, regardless of the child's economic status or minority status, a child can succeed, and as long as wages are low for teachers, then we fail to attract the kind of people that we like.

I know we have excellent people within our system right now, but we also have a shortage of teachers, so that teachers are now teaching in classrooms that they are not certified to teach in, which exacerbates the problem of students not learning. So we have to maintain a high quality work force, and one way of doing that is investing heavily in professional development, which we need to do, but the other area that needs significant attention is to dramatically increase the wages that these hard-working people are making, because it's not fair to them.

Chairman Hoekstra. Captain McClure, did you want to say something about the home schooling? I noticed you pulled the microphone over.

Captain McClure. Mr. Cox fairly accurately responded to it. I, too, live in the East Mountains, and many of our neighbors have pulled their kids out in recent years and home schooled them.

Chairman Hoekstra. One of the options alluded to is when you open up the different options for schools and smaller schools, that you use the schools, or they become tools for a lot of other things. How do you address that concern?

Mr. Marks. I don't know. I just know that the gist of what I said is, small schools that provide those kind of caring environments, and those kind of alternatives that Mr. Vigil and everyone here has spoken to, are extremely successful. I don't want to get lost in the fact that there may be some abuses of a system, but I would hope that the state could keep that in line, as we experiment with this new movement which I think has tremendous support and enthusiasm. Okay?

Captain McClure. If I may, one of the things that scares people away from supporting alternative schools is they have in their mind an idea that the exponential cost is greatly increased. That's not the case. I've been reading some research and studies on financial support of these smaller schools, and it's basically quality over quantity, and you can take funds without putting a great strain on the taxpayer. You can take an adequate amount of funds and make a very effective alternative school.

Before the freshman program was cut from the city dropout prevention program, they cited that the program was, per student, not cost-effective. It was too expensive, and I offered to continue the program at half the budget. Once the setup has occurred, once you've got your structures and your textbooks and your equipment and your desks, that's the majority of the cost. Once that occurs in the first couple of years of the school's existence, you can trim that budget progressively until you get it down to a reasonable amount that I think the taxpayers would find to be an equitable balance between success amongst the students and the burden that they have to carry to pay for it.

Mr. Cox. One thing that I forgot to mention that I think is very important is the fact that in this State, if you create a charter school, the State only agrees to fund you for one year. So that makes a very difficult situation to go get a mortgage when the banker says, "Well, what's going to happen next year?"

Chairman Hoekstra. Good point; a one-year mortgage.

Mr. Marks. Let me clarify that. We do get operational funds every year, but as for the stimulus funds, it's a one-shot deal.

Chairman Hoekstra. I'd like to thank the panel for being here. Heather, thank you for inviting us. She's an articulate and aggressive Congresswoman expressing the needs of New Mexico and the special circumstances of New Mexico to her colleagues in Washington. We listen, and thank you very much for inviting us here to be a part of this today.

Mrs. Wilson. Thank you for coming, Mr. Chairman; all three of you. I really appreciate your willingness to be here and see what's working and what's not, and get some good suggestions.

Chairman Hoekstra. Sometimes you get up at 5:00 in the morning, we had snow this morning, looking at getting up that early and going to the plane one more time. Both panels, you made it a very worthwhile exercise to be out here today and to take a look at how we're investing our Federal funds to help kids like Geoff and the kids in New Mexico achieve what we all want them to achieve, which is nothing but the best. We want the best and the brightest. I'm selfish. I want the best and brightest kids of anyplace in the world here in New Mexico, in Colorado, Michigan, or Wisconsin. If everybody else in the world is up to our standards, that's okay, but if there is going to be a ranking, I want our kids to be number one. So thank you very much for the excellent testimony and the stimulating testimony.

The record will stay open for 14 days. If there's anybody in the audience that would like to submit some written statements or comments, they can do so through the Education and Work Force Committee in Washington. And without any other comments,

the Committee will stand adjourned.

Whereupon, the Subcommittee was adjourned at approximately 4:50 p.m.

APPENDIX A – WRITTEN OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN PETE HOEKSTRA, SUBCOMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATIONS, COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE

OPENING STATEMENT

CHAIRMAN PETE HOEKSTRA

Committee on Education and the Workforce

Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

Albuquerque, New Mexico

January 24, 2000

Good afternoon. My name is Pete Hoekstra and I am the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations for the Education and the Workforce Committee. I would like to thank you for being here this afternoon to discuss the important issue of dropout prevention. I am very pleased to hold this hearing in my friend Heather Wilson's district.

The hearing that we are having today is the 20th field hearing this Subcommittee has held in the past four years during the 104th, 105th and 106th Congresses. We held these hearings as a part of a project we call "Education at a Crossroads." We've been to numerous cities, including

- The Bronx, New York City
- Chicago
- South Central Los Angeles
- Battle Creek, Michigan
- And now, Albuquerque, New Mexico.

Throughout our field hearings, the Subcommittee has heard witnesses all across the country ask for a number of changes with respect to federal education programs. Over and over, we have found that in too many cases, federal law is just too bureaucratic and doesn't offer local schools and districts enough flexibility. Rather than promoting innovation and creativity this combination often stifles reform.

Today we are going to hear about strategies for preventing students from dropping out of school. Specifically, we are going to hear how early childhood education, teacher training, charter schools and school choice can help all children receive a high quality education.

Most importantly, we are here to hear from you about what is working here in New Mexico – what is effectively improving student achievement and keeping kids in school. I doubt that a

bureaucrat in Washington designed the programs and strategies we'll be hearing about. You all know better than anyone in Washington what students in your state need, and what works best for them. Washington should stay out of the way and not impede effective local efforts, and instead empower what works.

I believe we are beginning to think in new and creative ways at the federal level about what can be done to help, rather than hinder, schools in Albuquerque and across the country. Last year we passed the "Education Flexibility Partnership Act," which expands the Ed-Flex program to all 50 states. President Clinton quickly signed this common-sense legislation into law. New Mexico participated in the pilot program, which allows states to approve waivers for federal education programs. This law makes a lot of sense, but it is just a first step in the right direction towards giving states and school districts the flexibility you need.

Last fall we passed legislation that gives states and school districts even more flexibility in exchange for increased accountability for student performance. This legislation is called the Straight A's Act. It is designed to give states the option of establishing "performance agreements" with Washington. These agreements would free States

from most regulations, while requiring substantial gains in student performance and narrowing achievement gaps. We believe that increases in student achievement should be the bottom line of federal education programs, not merely compliance with rules made in Washington. States and school districts should focus on students, not whether forms are filled out correctly and sent in on time.

Ed-Flex and Straight A's are small, but important, initiatives that will help ensure that Washington empowers you to help children, and does not get in the way with overly restrictive rules and regulations.

I look forward to hearing more about what is working in New Mexico and what you think should happen in Washington. We know there are some amazing examples of what is working across the country and we hope to learn about some of them today. We are here to learn from you.

APPENDIX B - WRITTEN STATEMENT OF CONGRESSWOMAN HEATHER WILSON, 1ST DISTRICT OF NEW MEXICO, US HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Education in the New Millenium:
"2020 Vision"

Congresswoman Heather Wilson

Albuquerque, New Mexico

January 24, 2000

"The gap between rich and poor, Anglo and minority has widened. . . . While discrimination is not the intent, the result of low expectations is discrimination of the worst kind. . . . If the twenty first century is to be just as much an American century as the twentieth century was, we must improve and expand public education, and no child should be left behind."

-- Congresswoman Heather Wilson

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you and your colleagues for coming to New Mexico. It is a pleasure and an honor to have you here.

In many ways, New Mexico is a snapshot of where America is going and the stories you will hear today from New Mexicans are important as we look to the future. In 20 years, America will look a lot more like New Mexico than it does today. We are the first minority-majority state. Minority and women owned businesses are starting up at twice the rate of other business. Thanks to world class research universities, two national laboratories and an emerging high tech business sector, we have some of the greatest scientific talent in the world. We have a culture so rich and wonderful that people come from all over the world just to experience the enchantment of New Mexico.

Yet, in his wonderful place one third of our children do not graduate from High School. We have more children in poverty than almost any state in the nation. And despite funding from the federal and state government, the gap between rich and poor, Anglo and minority has widened.

While there many theories about this gap, there are enough break-the-mold exceptional schools in neighborhoods where poverty is the norm and brown is the

dominant skin color to make those theories start to sound like excuses for low expectations. Most children will generally live up or down to the expectations that we set for them. While discrimination is not the intent, the result of low expectations is discrimination of the worst kind.

I think it is important to reflect for a moment on why improving public education is critical. In fact, I believe it is the most important issue facing America today.

At the dawn of the twentieth century, in 1900, only 15% of American adults had a high school diploma. This year, thanks to a commitment by leaders early in the twentieth century to have universal high school education, as we enter the new millenium, 85% of American adults have a high school diploma. Life expectancy for a man was 45 years; now it is 72. While that is great progress, we have to look ahead, not back. In 1900, one third of Americans were still working on the farm and there were a lot more manual labor jobs than there are today.

My grandparents didn't have high school diplomas, but they didn't need them to succeed and support their families. The children, just days old, coming home from the hospital today in the arms of loving parents will need a lot more education to cope and contribute in 2020.

What will our world be like in 20 years?

We will have mapped the human gene and many medical treatments will be personalized to your own DNA. And we may have solved the shortage of donor organs because if you need a new one, we might be able to take your DNA and grow one for you.

The computer that sits on your desk will be an antique in the Smithsonian 10 generations out of date, and the one that you have will be between 500 and a thousand

times more powerful than the one you have today. The laptop you have today that cost $2,000 is as powerful as a 1980 IBM mainframe that cost $10 million.

The entire body of knowledge contained in the Library of Congress will be stored in a one cubic inch space.

Your television, telephone and computer will probably be one device. And when the phone rings, you may put on glasses with an earpiece to meet the caller in virtual reality chat room.

All of these wonders – and dozens more that we cannot even imagine -- are being unleashed by entrepreneurs who are common men with uncommon vision. And the enabling force that has brought us to this point was the belief that education should not just be for elite, that every child has the potential to do great things if given the tools and expected to achieve. 90% of the scientists who have ever lived in human history are alive today.

In the twentieth century we made the transition from an agrarian to an industrial economy. Now we are making the transition to an information economy. It will change our society as surely as the urbanization of America changed our society. It will affect the way we get health care, the way we communicate, the way we are entertained, the way we do business, the way we shop, the way we learn.

The education that was good enough for our grandparents was not good enough for us. And what is good enough for us will be woefully inadequate for our children. If the twenty-first century is to be just as much an American century as the twentieth century was, we must improve and expand public education, and no child should be left behind.

I want to take a moment what I think we need to do, recognizing that many of these things are not the responsibility of federal government, but we have to start coloring outside the lines.

We need a longer school year. There is a direct relationship between the time spent learning and how much a child learns. Yet our 180-day school year – a relic of our agrarian past – persists. Over ten years we could lengthen the school year by 3 days per year so that children are in school 210 days per year. That would still allow ample time for vacations and summer camp and family time.

We need to raise the graduation requirements in science and math. To graduate from High School, students must have 4 years of high school level math and 4 years of high school level science.

We need to end social promotion, particularly in the first three grades.

We need to raise the mandatory school attendance age from 16 to 18 unless a child is going into an accredited technical training program, into an apprenticeship or into the military.

We need greater variety in the public school system and real choices for parents. We need small schools as well as big schools; schools that specialize in particular areas as well as those that just provide a good general education; schools that emphasize structure and ones that don't. All of them must be accountable for student performance. But any parent who has more than one child knows that some kids need a different approach from others. In states with longer experience with charter schools, they have often filled these gaps. And they have disproportionately served low income, minority students and students at-risk of dropping out.

We need middle school and high school teachers who have degrees in their fields – science, math, English, history.

We need to make it easier for second career teachers to enter the classroom without having to return to college full time for a year or more.

We need more high quality pre-schools and easier access to them for poor students.

We need to strengthen curricula, particularly in math and science and increase our investment in professional development for teachers.

We need child-by-child, class-by-class, school-by-school, district-by-district accountability for results. We cannot tolerate low achieving schools that are not improving, and no child should be left behind. School districts should have broad latitude and strong positive and negative incentives to take the management action needed to demand improved performance.

By the year 2020, ninety nine percent of our children must graduate from high school and three quarters must go on to college, technical training, apprenticeships or into the military.

We need to accept the responsibility and reality that parents are a child's first and most important teachers. And it's a whole lot easier to be a child's teacher if you are more than a child yourself and if you have the strength of a stable intact family. We need to reduce the rates of teen pregnancies and out-of-wedlock births and get the message to kids: "Get a life before you make one."

We need to bring art and music – particularly music – back into the classroom. There is a strong correlation between music and achievement in mathematics that is now being explained as we image the human brain. While a newborn's brain is fully formed, the connections between cells are not. The growth of these connections is stimulated by experience in the world. There are windows for this development which, if missed, cannot always be recovered. That is the tragedy of the neglected child – dark holes

where there are no connections at all. The same area of the brain handles music and math. Young children who sing or play instruments regularly do better in math.

Yes, all of this takes money. So did universal high school education. So did the GI Bill and Pell Grants. The alternative is to choose to lag behind.

So where do we begin?

We start from where we are.

I look forward to hearing the testimony today. It will help to shape ideas for three pieces of legislation that I will introduce in the session of Congress that is about to begin.

1. **Teacher Training:** I will introduce legislation to improve teacher training and professional development, including programs to make it easier for second career teachers to get into the classroom.

2. **Charter School Loan Guarantee Fund:** I will introduce legislation to establish a Federal Charter School Loan Guarantee Fund. Charter Schools provide options within the public school system, but, in most states are held back by the lack of facilities and capital money. The Federal Government has loan guarantee funds for companies that export, for housing and for some small businesses. If there were one for charter schools, banks would be more willing to lend and interest payments – the cost of money – would be much lower. The federal government would only have to pay if the charter school defaulted on its loans.

3. **Improving Early Care and Education:** I will introduce legislation to improve early childhood education for the poorest children by requiring that any federal childcare funds must pay at or above market rates for child care and pay a premium for accredited care.

These bills are only the beginning. I look forward to working with community leaders in Albuquerque, state officials in Santa Fe, and my colleagues in Washington to

ensure that the children who graduate from high school in 2020 are ready to build the next American century.

APPENDIX C – WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DR. MIQUELA RIVERA, DEPUTY DIRECTOR – EARLY CARE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION DIVISION, NEW MEXICO CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES DEPARTMENT, SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE

January 24, 2000

Miquela Rivera, Ph.D.
Deputy Director - Early Care
Prevention and Intervention Division
New Mexico Children, Youth & Families Department

Mr. Chair, Honorable Members of the Committee, Ladies and Gentlemen:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today about the connection between and the importance of quality early care and education and the prevention of students dropping out of school. As a licensed clinical psychologist who has worked with children, as an administrator of child care, child development programming and family nutrition in New Mexico, and as a concerned mother, I cannot stress to you enough the importance of quality early care and education programming and its influence on a person's future.

Kindergarten may be the first mandated step to a formal education, but preparation for school success happens long before then. Research has shown that, in terms of brain development, by kindergarten the process is half complete. Preparation for school success begins at birth, and school children must be ready in these seven critical areas:

1. **Language: our ability to communicate, both in receiving messages and in sending them;**

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2. Cognitive abilities: thinking and reasoning, assimilating new information and learning to apply it;
3. Social skills: getting along with others, picking up cues from other people and learning to live responsibly in a community;
4. Emotional development: the ability to attach to others, to understand their feelings as well as our own, and to demonstrate self-control;
5. Psychological development: including self-concept, the ability to cope and to perceive the world and how it should be;
6. Physical abilities: coordination, movement and mastery of the world by being active in it; and
7. Moral development: our sense of right and wrong and our understanding of the choices we make.

Of course, not everybody develops at exactly the same pace, but every single child has a "critical window," an opportunity of time in which certain areas of development must occur. In some of these areas, if the development doesn't occur during that critical window, the opportunity is lost forever; in other areas, that development can occur later, but it's much harder, if not impossible, to ever really catch up.

The connection between quality early care and education and school success is apparent: If you are ready for school, you are more apt to enjoy it and complete it. For the

millions of children who are in child care nationally, that preparation for school success will occur away from their parents. What we teach our children and how we teach it matters, from the moment they are born. And since the greatest learning potential occurs from ages two to ten, the quality of school age child care matters, too.

The High/Scope Preschool Curriculum Comparison longitudinal study which began in 1967 found that children born in poverty experience fewer emotional problems and felony arrests if they attended a preschool program which focused on child-initiated activities instead of scripted academic instruction. In other words, when children are allowed to plan, do and review their own activities with support from trained teachers, they ultimately are more successful than children who are taught with a more rigid approach in which only academic skills and right answers are rewarded. If children are encouraged to learn and given the appropriate opportunity to do so, they will learn early to self-direct in positive, productive ways. We cannot simply teach children information; we must show them how to acquire an use it.

The Carolina Abecedarian project results which were published this past year (1999) revealed that early childhood education can make a critical difference in the later success of poor children. This project was a carefully controlled research design project in which children had an individualized prescription of educational activities, games incorporated into the child's day and activities which focused on social, emotional and cognitive areas of development, with emphasis on language. Children who participated in

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the intervention program had higher cognitive test scores from their toddler years from age 21, attained higher achievement level sin reading and math, completed more years of education and were more likely to attend college. The mothers of those children also achieved higher educational and employment status than mothers whose children were not in the program.

How can we slow the rate of school dropouts?

- Start early. Development of the abilities crucial to school success occurs largely by age 5 and continues through age 10, slowing thereafter. Invest in the youngest children for the greatest long-term effect.
- Support quality child care. It's in everyone's best interest.
- Support the adequate training of teachers. Head Start has raised the educational expectation of their teachers nationally. General child care providers need to be supported so they can do the same.
- Compensate early care an education providers adequately for their efforts. Children's development is affected by stability in their relationships, both in and out of the home. Turnover in child care is often high, mainly because of low pay. Slow down turnover and you'll help stabilize those crucial relationships for children.
- Expect developmentally appropriate curricula and child development practices for children of all ages in child care. Health and safety are important, but what we do and how we do it also matter.
- Support families in the crucial mission of preparing their children for success.

We'll all benefit as a result.

APPENDIX D - WRITTEN STATEMENT OF LOIS WEIGAND, DIRECTOR, EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER, FARMINGTON, NEW MEXICO

Emmanuel Baptist Child Development Center and Academy
211 W. 20th Street
Farmington, New Mexico 87401
Phone 325-0090 or 325-2090
Fax 327-3571 E-mail weigand@cyberport.com

"Good Beginnings Last Forever"

To: House Committee on Education
Representative Heather Wilson
January 24, 2000

From: Lois Weigand, Director
Emmanuel Baptist Child Development Center
Farmington, New Mexico

Representing: New Mexico Child Care Association as Vice-President for Rural Members with over 100 Childcare Providers throughout the state of New Mexico

Re: Drop-out Prevention: The Importance of High Quality Early Education

Lois Weigand, CDC Director Emanuel Weigand, Academy Principal

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Outlook for Education Field Hearing
January 24, 2000

Congresswoman Wilson and other members of the panel:

I am Lois Weigand, Director of Emmanuel Baptist Child Development Center in Farmington. Thank you for allowing me to share my concerns about Early Childhood Education.

I have worked with children and their families since 1962. Like all beginning teachers, my ideal was to make a difference in the lives of students. With all of the cultural and social changes, I came to realize that I needed to reach children before they became teenagers, so I began working with children from birth through kindergarten, on a volunteer basis in 1972, as preschool coordinator in my church. In 1992, after more than 26 years in the public school classroom, I retired and began concentrating on Early Childhood Education on a fulltime basis.

I applaud Congresswoman Wilson for looking into the link between Early Childhood Education and increasing the high school graduation rate. "Good Beginnings Last Forever" likewise "Bad Beginnings Last Forever". I believe it is also important to look at the link between Early Childhood Education and youthful violence. Some of the same factors, which cause youth to drop out of school also, are in the background of the violence we have seen.

The violent crime rate among juveniles has quadrupled over the last twenty five years and the last decade has seen a doubling of weapons offences for children ages 10-17. Self-directed violence has also soared with the suicide rate for children 10-14 years of age tripling in the same period. Aggravated assault by teenagers has jumped by sixty-four percent in the last decade. Forty American school children have been killed in schools each year for the last five years (James Alan Fox, Dean of Criminal Justice at Northeastern University in response to the release of the Uniform Crime Report issued by the FBI in Oct. 1997.)

Many, if not most, knowledgeable individuals at local, state and national levels remain concerned about the rates of aggression and violence among young people. School resources for dealing with delinquent children are overwhelmed beyond their capacities. The juvenile prison system is also overwhelmed. (Ghosts from the Nursery)

It is a very sad thought that the building of prisons is a major growth industry in the nation.

On March 9, 1997, the US Department of Justice released the results of a new study that showed that if present rates of incarceration continue, one out of twenty babies born in the United States today will spend part of their adult lives in state or federal prisons. An African-American male has a greater than one in four chances of going to prison in his lifetime, while a Hispanic male has a one in six chance of serving time. (Bureau of Justice Statistics." Lifetime Likelihood of Going to State or Federal Prison)

We have been greatly concerned about government spending on the U.S. Health System, which many believe is in a crisis, we may not have noticed that the cost of the

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Criminal Justice System is three times the cost of the nation's entire health budget. (*Bureau of Justice Statistics "Crime Data Brief"The costs of crimes to victims)*

Media coverage of violence—murder and rape, gang violence, serial killings, the murder of parents, children and co-workers—treats violent behavior as if it suddenly emerges from a developmental void. It is rare for a story to look for sources of this behavior even in preadolescence or elementary school. In order to understand the tide of violent behavior, in which America is submerged, we must look before preschool to the first thirty-three months of life. Those months, including the nine-month of prenatal development and the first two years after birth, harbor the seeds of violence for a growing percentage of America's children.

As more brain research indicates, we must appreciate the crucial nature of physical, emotional and cognitive care during the first thirty-three months of life. As we begin to discover the previously unimaginable impact of the smallest insult to the brain at crucial time in development, we are beginning to see that much of what we have formerly written off as unknowable in origin and therefore unchangeable, can and must be prevented.

Rachael Carson's book *"Silent Spring"* showed us the link between toxins and the destruction of our ecosystems. More than thirty years after *"Silent Spring"*, we have yet to understand that the same dynamic is at work in the human experience. Toxic experiences—family violence, abuse and chronic neglect, along with toxic substances such as nicotine, alcohol and illegal drugs—are being physically and emotionally absorbed by our babies in record numbers. As in the natural world, these are complex links between the quality of human development and the status of the human community. Infancy is a crucial developmental stage when an individual forms the core of conscience, develops the ability to trust and relate to others, lays down the foundation for lifelong learning and thinking. The quality of the human environment is directly tied to each individual's ability to love, to empathize with others and to engage in complex thinking. By failing to understand the cumulative effects of the poisons assaulting our babies in the form of abuse, neglect and toxic substances, we are participating in our own destruction.

Our ignorance of and indifference to the complex nature of infancy has significantly contributed to one sign of system distress that we can no longer ignore. Violence is epidemic in American society. It dominates our media, permeates our play, steals our loved ones, ruins our families and claims a growing percentage of our young.

Each year the Children's Defense Fund published a yearbook entitled *The State of America's Children*. According to their 1996 and 1997 issues:

- A baby is born every minute to a teen mother.
- The mortality rate for American babies under the age of one is higher than that of any other western industrialized nation; African-American babies are more than twice as likely to die in their first year of life as white babies.
- Twenty-five percent of our preschool children live below the poverty level.
- One in four foster children, in five states sampled, entered foster care before his or her first birthday. Newborns make up the largest share of those infants.
- One in three victims of physical abuse is a baby less than twelve months old. Every day a baby dies of abuse or neglect at the hands of his or her caregivers.

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- Three out of every four children murdered in the twenty-six top industrialized nations combined were American.
- Only 8.4 percent of infant and toddler care in U.S. childcare centers is considered developmentally appropriate care; 51.1 percent was judged mediocre quality care, and 40.4 percent poor quality care

These statistics are scary, but they are factors that can be helped with money and education, which is put into place in time to make a difference.

Dropping out of school is also linked to learning disabilities. The vast majority of children classified in special education have specific learning disabilities such as a reading or an information-processing problem. In 1976-1994 the number of children with specific learning disabilities requiring special services went from just under 800,000 served annually to nearly 2.4 million, an increase of 1.6 million or 45 percent. In 1993-4, approximately 7.7 percent of all children enrolled in school received special education services compared to 4.5 percent in 1976-7, an increase of about 70 percent. Students with specific learning disabilities account for the majority of that increase, comprising more than half of all disabled children served. Five percent of all children enrolled in school require those services, a number that is expected to increase. It is also interesting to note that Ritalin is now being prescribed for 3-5 percent of all children in the United States to control attention disorders. Because most of these children are males, this means that 10-12 percent of all boys in the United States between the ages of six and fourteen are on this medication. (*The Future of Children: Special Education for Children with Disabilities, Vol. 6.1, spring 1996. David and Lucille Packard Foundation, Los Altos, California.)*

Our challenge is to move this information into the cultural mainstream and into the legislative bodies to create a critical mass of people who know and who care and who will enable this information to go from understanding to practice.

My mother used to say, " an ounce of prevention is worth more than a pound of cure."

The information we now have on the brain and its development gives us a new opportunity. If healthy emotional and cognitive development (or the opposite) is substantially rooted in our experiences during the first months of life, then the adults who guide this development must have society's attention. It is this group, the nurturers of our children (parents, extended family, friends or paid caregivers) who are the key to preventing violence and school dropouts. As they shape the future they need the tools, skills, information, and social values to adequately do the job. These Early Childhood Educators must be important to those who are providing the funding, regardless of whether the funding is state or federal. When those caring for children are themselves healthy, have adequate financial and emotional support and are equipped with information and skills on what to expect of children, how to discipline constructively, how to manage anger and stress, the children in their care benefit. When such needs are poorly met, it is the children who absorb the consequences. We must stop thinking of this important group of people, the Early Childhood Educators, as baby sitters and give them the status, training and income they need and deserve to make a difference the lives of our most important resource, our children.

Head Start programs have made a difference for many low income children and the move to focus on not only the three to five year olds but the birth through age two with the Early head Start are important but these are not enough.

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Federal block grants given to states need to be regulated so states disperse those funds with equity for all children. Beginning in July 1999, New Mexico childcare providers received the first significant rate increase in nine years, but the increase was still not up to the 1997 market rate survey. There should not be a difference in the subsidy rates paid in rural and metro. It does not cost less to care for a child in Farmington than it does in Albuquerque. Childcare workers average wage is $5.15-$6.00 per hour with no benefits. Some childcare centers will not take state-funded children because the state does not pay enough to care for the child. The average rate paid by the state is $13.25/day with average cost to take care of a child at $20.00 per day.

- When I testified to a state legislative committee in October, I followed one child through the $3.5 million increase of funds. Her situation has changed at this time because of domestic violence; Lauren's mother and her four sisters have had to move into a shelter. She had been functioning as a single mom, but decided to give the children's father another chance but it did not work.
- We received $8.00 more for the month of July for Lauren's care.
- With an average of 21 days of attendance in a month, this gives us an increase of 38 cents/day for the care of this infant.
- Were we to break this down further with Lauren, who arrives just after 7:00 AM and is picked up at 6:00 PM, this gives us an increase of 3 cents/hour.

Poorly subsidized childcare not only impacts families, but also employees of the centers that cannot remain open. San Juan County has had 5 childcare centers close their doors between May 1998 and April 1999.

- Childcare workers are unemployed.
- Parents lose childcare.
- Children are uprooted from familiar people and environment (All brain research shows that this is not good)
- Mothers are not going to be able to go off of welfare if there is no one to care for their children.
- Tanf mothers are generally not able to enter the ranks of childcare workers because of lack of skills and education.
- San Juan County now has 25 licensed centers and homes with a capacity of 191 for those under the age of 2
- There are 958 slots for those over age 2
- There are 51 unlicensed, registered homes which adds another 204 childcare slots
- For the month of April, San Juan County had 548 children in the state assisted childcare system
- This leaves 601 slot for paying parents who then subsidize twice, once when they pay taxes and again when they are charged more for their childcare, because the state is not paying their fair share of the cost of caring for children.

There is another category of childcare, unlicensed, unregulated homes. How many children are being cared for in unregulated homes? There is no way of knowing. Untrained providers caring for children, who are in this critical time period of the first thirty-three months, do not give them the necessary stimulation for the brain to develop and just perpetuate the problems this hearing is addressing. We cannot improve the dropout rate among teenagers without addressing the origin of the factors that cause those

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children to fail. It is imperative to address Early Childhood Education before we lose a generation.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you and for your concern about the children of New Mexico and America

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APPENDIX E - WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DR. MOISES VENEGAS, DIRECTOR, THE ALBUQUERQUE PARTNERSHIP, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

School Completion:
In Search of the American Paradise

Testimony:

Subcommittee on Oversight and
Investigations Committee on Education and the Workforce
United States House of Representatives

The Albuquerque Partnership

Chair – Jerome Romero
Vice Chair – Deana Walter

Prepared by:
Dr. Moises Venegas, Director

January 24, 2000

Albuquerque, New Mexico

(83)

School Completion:

In Search of the American Paradise

There is a gentle song that always seems to remind me of a search for a better day. A better day in education where all children learn. The lyrics:

She calls out to the man on the street,
Sir can you help?
It's cold and I've no place to sleep
He pretends he can't hear
He can see she's been crying.,
Oh lord there is nothing
More anybody can do
Oh, Lord there must be something you can do
Another day for you and me in paradise

Perhaps on this day, January 24, 2000, it is appropriate to assert ourselves for another day in paradise at the start of this new millenium. What does the record show for those in the educational system who have not been able to graduate and find themselves in search of a work place and a better life.

- Peabody Assessment for **five-year-olds** in a typical urban school in New Mexico:
  - Total assessed, 69: 6 bilingual, 28 monolingual Spanish speakers, 35 monlingual English speakers
  - Range of scores for the five-year-olds

Number of Students	Age Level Score
2	2 yrs
20	3
21	4
19	5
5	6
2	7

- Third Grade achievement scores (percentiles)

School	Minority Enrollment		Score		
			96	97	98
A	84		43	41	27
B	74.3		44	32	27
C	86.6		28	35	27
D	85.6		24	27	26
E	90		30	38	24
F	92.7		28	38	22
G	94.7		18	27	20
H	95.8		13	12	17

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- District Dropout by Ethnicity

	1987	1998
Anglo	16.3%	23.9%
African-American	22.9%	40.0%
Hispanic	23.8%	43.1%
Native American	29.3%	41.8%
Asian	12.9%	15.3%
District Total	19.6%	33.9%

Analysis

As we review the achievement and dropout data for this sample of public schools for the last three to five years, there have not been significant changes.

Some schools have improved and others have lost a few percentile points, but the district average remains about the same. The gap between minority schools and the other schools is still about **50-55 percentile** points.

The cohort dropout report (longitudinal) was completed for the first time in five years with data from 1993 through 1998. The increase in the dropouts in the school district may be a combination of a more precise tracking and counting along with an increase in the number of students actually dropping out.

- There is a significant correlation between race/ethnicity, socioeconomic level and school achievement and dropout rates…the higher the Hispanic/minority enrollment in a school, the lower the student achievement and the higher the dropout rate.

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- There is a broad range in achievement among the elementary schools for the fourth grade; the high-achieving schools are in the **80 percentile** and the low-achieving schools are in the **20-30 percentile**.
- The 6th grade middle school range varies from a **76th percentile** to a **21st percentile.**

- For the 1997-1998 school year just completed, almost half **(44.7%)** of the students who started the ninth grade at School A in 1994 dropped out of school. School B had the lowest dropout rate at **8.4%.**
- On an annual basis there are approximately 2610 students who drop out!
- In 1987 the cohort dropout rate was **19.6%** compared to **33.9%** in 1998.
- Native Americans had the highest cohort dropout rate in 1987 at **29.3%** and Hispanics had the highest in 1998 at **43.1%.**
- Fourth grade math scores range from a **5 percent** proficiency at School A to **81 percent** at School B.

Recommendations

What is it that we must do to increase our graduation rates and reduce dropouts in our schools. First, we must focus precisely on that student population that schools have been unable and unwilling to educate. That student group remains consistent throughout this country __ ethnic and racial minorities and the less

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affluent in our society. But reducing the number of dropouts is less about intervention at the high school level and more about education and prevention in the early grades. Early Childhood education __ between the years of three and ten __ what skills are being taught and learned by the student? Look at the data __ if the child cannot read at the third grade level or is scoring at the 21st percentile, does it get better or worse as she/he moves up to high school?

There is a question in our minds that we must not only continue such programs in the early years such as Headstart, Homestart, Even Start, Child Find, but we must expand and provide accessibility for those students and families with the greatest need. Some considerations for these early childhood education programs:

- Are they child based and speak to the needs of the student rather than the needs of the teacher's union?
- Is the instructional staff trained, educated and certified to deal with the needs of the three – ten-year-old?
- Accountability – Is learning being measured on a yearly basis and are changes being made based on student learning outcomes?
- Headstart – Are such programs providing an educational program or just basic child care?

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- Eliminate social promotion but insist on skill acquisition for each child.
- Eliminate placement/tracking based on the lack of acquisition of educational skills that eventually lead to dropouts and basic remedial classes in high school.
- Title I __ restructure and eliminate "pull out" programs; continue funding based on student learning outcomes not on "low expectations" for this student group.

Educational Framework

The recommendations for improvement and effective schools are basic__not too different from years past. We are less concerned with the specifics of a reading program, organizational structures or teaching styles. Whether there is bilingual education, Proposition 1227, or a legal suit, they are of less concern to us than whether all students are learning. The basic questions remain; can you read, can you compute, and are you prepared for the workforce?

As in the past, we recommend a focus on the following:

- **INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP** - - Not so much political but that leadership which relates to learning_ _starting with the members of the school board to every employee. The school board should certainly model a behavior that provides educational/instructional leadership rather than seeing themselves as elected officials that represent an internal group within

the system. The principal is one of the most important members of the organizational leadership structure.

- **HIGH EXPECTATIONS** - - Not only must we have high expectations for **all** students, but also every staff member that works with students must have the skills to help students achieve their high expectations. The schools must be careful with their "regression analysis" that is used to predict how students will perform on achievement tests based on socioeconomic status, "how poor are you"? As an example, if the predicted ITBS score for one of the "poor schools" is **39th percentile**_ _is that the expectation? And if the "poor school" scores at the **44th percentile**, has

that school achieved high evaluation marks? One final note on expectations_ _we must not confuse standards with expectations.

- **SAFE AND ORDERLY ENVIRONMENT** - - At each learning site, are all students safe from threats and violence? The same should be asked of the home and community environment.
- **CLEAR AND FOCUSED MISSION** - - Clear and precise goals, objectives and activities for each school/learning site in the district are a must.
- **TIME ON TASK** - - we visit different school sites even in the "best" schools we find students waiting at different times of the day one to two hours for learning to happen. The learning time requirement for our schools

are: kindergarten, 2.5 hours: grades 1-8, 5.5 hours; and grades 9-12, 6 hours. Learning takes time and we should use all available time.

- **TIMELY AND FREQUENT MONITORING OF STUDENT PROGRESS** - - With appropriate adjustments, not only should schools monitor and assess, but also share the information with parents, concerned citizens and the general community. If the progress is good, let us celebrate together and if it is bad let us work together to improve. Under no circumstances should we have to take legal measures to acquire public information about our schools. The schools belong to all of us.
- **HOME/SCHOOL RELATIONS** - - Difficult as it may seem at times in 2000, we must be able to communicate equally well with the diverse members of

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our various school communities. As a rule, do schools feel less accountable to parents of poor students?

- **OPEN/POSITIVE CLIMATE** - - In the schools and in the Albuquerque community, we must promote a climate of trust, sharing and the ability to work together despite differences that we may have. We must learn to be "tough-minded" friends who may argue and disagree but continue to work together on improvement for all our students.

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The issue of who is learning and who is not achieving and dropping out, is not about pedagogy, reading programs or a specific "headstart" program. In this country we have always educated those who we **want** to educate. We must reaffirm the acceptance of responsibility for all our children - - - poor, affluent, white, black, and brown. We must commit to equal opportunity and intent to raise the achievement level for each and every child.

APPENDIX F - WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DR.VIOLA FLOREZ, DEAN, COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

House of Representatives Committee on Education and the Workforce
Congressional Hearing - Drop Out Prevention

January 24, 2000

Presented by: Dr. Vi. Florez, Dean, College of Education, University of New Mexico
"Teacher Quality: Impact on Student Achievement"

The shortage of high quality teachers and the teacher retention challenge is critical to student achievement. It is important that the state as a whole recognize the importance of providing incentives for quality teachers to stay in the classroom. The quality of the teacher determines the success of students as indicated by the research data today. With what we know about learning and teaching, it is critical that we pay attention to teachers as professionals with time and resources.

A. Recruiting, preparing, and retaining quality teachers can be a central strategy for improving the state's schools. This strategy should include recruitment, preparation, induction, and advanced professional development, evaluation, and intervention.

B. In order for students to meet or exceed assessment standards, school personnel, such as teachers, administrators, counselors, and other school personnel need ongoing training that is of high quality, that is standards based/student based to meet the academic needs of students. Professional development is essential to ensure that practicing teachers stay current with the lastest developments in their content fields as well as the most current issues in education including technology, literacy, school drop outs, and school violence.

C. In order to meet student needs, services for students must be provided beyond the day to day classroom routine. Strong and well planned summer programs that enhance knowledge and skill for students grades Pre-K-12 are critical. After school programs that focus on student development and learning are important to student success and can often be costly up front - but the long term effects are positive, especially when it relates to student retention.

D. To recruit and retain quality teachers we must provide these services: teacher compensation must be restructured to offer career pathways taking into consideration credentialing, responsibilities, merit pay, and incentives for quality teachers to stay in classrooms. The recruitment of competent individuals to enter the teaching profession directly impacts student achievement. In New Mexico, that means recruiting educational assistants, individuals with degrees in other fields, individuals interested second-careers, retirees, and young people searching for a profession.

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Induction is essential to reduce the flood of new teachers who leave the profession in a few years. National and State data indicate that many teachers do not stay in teaching and many upon finishing teacher preparation programs, choose not to teach. By having mentoring programs during their preparation and after they enter the classroom, it can help these new professionals gain confidence and skill in what they have studied to do. Induction and mentoring programs that directly impact teachers have a direct impact on student success.

3. Why students drop out of school is complex and not linked to any one factor. However, national research does indicate that national, state, and local policies can make a difference by creating conditions that lessen the difficulties for students to stay in school that have a high risk for dropping out. Implementing sound and well thought through policies that affect the lives of children is important to the retention of students in school. The most common theme in most reported data - is personal interest in the individual personality, interest and life of the student. Words like respect, attention, awareness, encouragement, and pride are the common indicators. That is why the recruitment and preparation of quality teachers is a serious matter that requires direct attention from parents, policy makers, businesses, community leaders, and state agencies. Professionals teaching must understand student learning, care for all students, and have a high level of knowledge and skill in the field they have selected to teach. All students deserve an excellent education and a good life.

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APPENDIX G - WRITTEN STATEMENT OF CHRIS BACA, PRESIDENT/CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, YOUTH DEVELOPMENT, INCORPORATED, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

WRITTEN TESTIMONY
On
DROP-OUT PREVENTION AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Presented to the
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
B-346 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
At the
EDUCATION FIELD HEARING
MONDAY, JANUARY 24, 2000
NEW MEXICO TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL INSTITUTE
Smith Brasher Hall
717 University Blvd. NE
Albuquerque, New Mexico

By
CHRIS BACA, MPA
PRESIDENT/CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
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DROP-OUT PREVENTION AND HIGH QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Links Between Drop-Out Prevention and High Quality Early Childhood Education

Among the significant reasons for the middle school and high school students dropping out of school are low self-esteem, lack of active parental involvement in the students' progress in academic and social areas, little connection to positive adult or adolescent role models, and little, if any, experience of academic success. High quality early childhood education, particularly the Early Head Start/Head Start model, provides the necessary early experiences and interventions to positively impact the child's subsequent educational history.

A significant body of research has clearly demonstrated that the most critical cognitive, social, emotional development takes place in the first five years. During those years the brain completes the other 50% of its development, including its capacity for healthy social interaction, positive self-concept, and empathy. Early Head Start/Head Start addresses all levels of development and works relentlessly with the parents to participate actively in the child's ongoing growth and development. Early Head Start stresses particularly the critical bonding process between parent and infant. In every way, Early Head Start/Head Start begins and sets in motion the formal education that will be well underway once the child enters and continues in the public school system.

Early Head Start/Head Start is uniquely suited to provide the child and the family the environment required for success. Classrooms are arranged to provide an environment conducive to growth, social interaction, and creative self-expression. Screening instruments assist the teachers to individualize the child's learning experience to his/her unique developmental stages. The curriculum reflects best practices in early childhood and responds to the children's individual situations and backgrounds. The program is structured to address every aspect of the child's development: cognitive, socio-emotional, small motor, large motor, and language. The program also provides for a sound nutrition plan and physical/dental health screenings and follow-up treatments.

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Underlying the program is the emphasis on the socio-emotional development of the child. The child cannot develop cognitive skills unless its emotional/social needs are met – unless he/she can learn to interact with others, develop an identity in relation to peers and adults that is positive, and he/she has learned to self-regulate behavior impulses and develop empathy. Activities, screenings, interventions are all geared toward achieving that readiness for learning and that confidence in themselves and their abilities.

Another integral feature of the Early Head Start/Head Start program is its strong parent involvement component. Staff and parents develop partnerships that build on family strengths to realize mutually developed goals. Parents are provided numerous opportunities to become actively involved in the growth and development of their children. They volunteer in the classroom and on the bus, they participate on parent committees and the Policy Council, they confer regularly with their child's teacher about the progress of the child and about activities they can do at home, and they assist in lesson planning and curriculum development. All of that serves to strengthen the parent's role as the child's primary educator and resource. Transition activities to the public schools again actively involve the parent and empower the parent to advocate for their child in the public school system. The parent is now an active partner in the child's educational career.

Innovative Features in YDI Head Start that Address Aspects Critical in Dropout Prevention

YDI Head Start staff and parents, through a variety of meetings, planning retreats, self-assessment process, cluster level meetings, policy council and YDI Board planning, have adopted 8 major goal areas for the five year period between 1999 - 2003. They are:

Goal 1
Provide Comprehensive Child Development Services

Staff/child ratio of 3:20 for full day classes over 8 hours a day:
This provides continuity and greater capacity for quality interaction between teachers and children.

Full NAEYC Accreditation for every center.
This ensures the delivery of a quality early childhood development program in every center.

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The adoption of the 4 Block Literacy Model for use in every Head Start classroom:
Every teacher will receive intensive training to ensure high quality literacy skill development for the children. This program will provide many hours throughout the year of training for the teachers, on-site technical assistance by the trainers, and materials and books for use by the children and teaching staff to ensure children enter Kindergarten with the required literacy skills to succeed in school.

The increase of full day, full year Head Start classes.
This ensures ongoing care and development for the children and allows parents to pursue education and employment.

Goal 2
To Ensure the Direct Participation of Parents and Increase Parent Involvement.

GED/ESL/CDA Classes for parents:
Classes are offered during the day and at night to allow for maximum participation in these classes that will assist parents in expanding their employment possibilities and becoming more active in advocacy issues. The CDA not only makes it possible for them to find employment in the child care field but also assists them in developing their own parenting skills.

Annual Parent Orientation/Workshops in a variety of Early Childhood Issues/Parent Substitute Training:
The orientation, the workshops at the center level, and an intensive substitute training program all contribute to the parents' greater understanding of best practices in early childhood and ways they can become more effective and involved parents. The intensive parent substitute-training program allows parents to become paid teaching substitutes in the classroom and has for many parents become the first step toward a career in the early childhood field.

Active Recruitment of Teen Mothers:
Since teen mothers and their children are at increased risk a special effort is made to recruit teen mothers into the Early Head Start and Head Start program to ensure positive outcomes in all areas for both the mother and the child.

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Goal 3
To Recruit, Train, and Assist in the Education of Staff

Post-Secondary Degrees for Staff:
By 2003, 50% of Head Start teachers will have their B.A. or A.A. degrees in Early Childhood and all teacher associates will have their CDA. This is to ensure a quality educational program in all centers. Increased salaries for degree attainment and scholarships for degree programs are some of the incentives for participating staff.

Ongoing in-service days and on-site technical assistance:
Training in all areas of early childhood development, family partnerships, community resources, and mental health issues continue throughout the year.

Goal 4
To Continue to Establish and Strengthen Community Partnerships

Strengthen partnerships with Health/Mental Health/Educational Services providers:
A strong partnership with the public schools' Child Find program has resulted in prompt services for children with developmental delays in all areas. Child Find staff have also provided consultation and on-site technical assistance to teaching staff. Numerous partnerships with community agencies assist staff in resource referral for families and increase the families' sense of being part of a larger community.

Goal 5
To Ensure that a Minimum of 10% of Enrollment Opportunities are Made Available to Children with Diagnosed Disabilities

Provide increased enrollment opportunities and services to children with diagnosed disabilities:
Increased collaboration with special education services providers such as Cuidando Los Ninos, RCI, Alta Mira, and the Child Find programs in all three counties (Bernalillo, Rio Arriba, and Taos) has resulted in increased enrollment opportunities and special services for children in a mainstreamed Head Start environment.

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Goal 6
To Provide Opportunities for Family Self-Sufficiency through Coordinated Efforts with the State of New Mexico

Increase full day services using TANF funding:
YDI Head Start collaborates with the State of New Mexico to provide expanded services for children and families who are recipients of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families and participate in the New Mexico Works program. This strengthens the parent's role in becoming the primary resource of their children, while offering high quality Early Head Start/Head Start services to the children and their families.

Continued parent training:
TANF parents have availed themselves of the parent substitute-training program and of the CDL certification program offered by YDI Head Start's Transportation Manager. The CDL makes it possible to become full time paid bus drivers in the Head Start program or any other transportation program requiring a CDL.

Goal 7
To Improve Facilities to Promote Healthy Child Development and Quality Business Operations

Improve facilities and playgrounds:
All facilities will be inspected on a regular basis to ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and thereby ensure the full participation of children with disabilities. Centers will be renovated and painted and playground equipment upgraded to create an environment conducive to positive mental health for children and adults.

Goal 8
To Improve Technology through Internet Access and a Wide Area Network System

Interactive, bi-lingual computers will be placed in all classrooms in all three counties of YDI Head Start's service area.
These computers and a variety of age appropriate software expand children's abilities in a variety of areas and fosters self-esteem as they can experience themselves developing a variety of computer related skills, along with literacy, language, and pre-math skills.

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Link all 31 Head Start centers across three counties via a computer network system.
Such network will make it possible for staff to communicate at all levels, be more responsive to the needs of families, (i.e. Processing enrollment applications and transfer requests, documenting child and family progress toward expressed goals, tracking medical, dental, nutrition services), and increase the efficiency of the day to day operation of the program.
++

Other YDI Head Start Initiatives

YDI is aware of the serious risk factors that accompany children and families living in extreme poverty. Because of this and because the evidence points more and more to the need for early prevention/intervention strategies to ensure positive socio-emotional development of children to prevent later school drop-out, substance abusing and/or violent behavior. YDI has sought to strengthen its mental health component on a number of levels. Some instances are:

1. The presence as a permanent full time staff member of a doctoral level clinical psychologist with extensive experience working with multi-cultural children and families.
The psychologist observes all Head Start classes on a regular basis, provides ongoing technical assistance to teaching staff on various guidance/behavioral issues, consults with staff and parents regarding indicated intervention strategies for children, works regularly with the Child Find staff and Head Start liaison in optimizing services to children referred for evaluation/treatment, and is a constant resource to families in mental health issues. He also provides workshops to staff and parents in child abuse & neglect issues, understanding and responding to children's feelings/behaviors, recognizing signs of having witnessed domestic violence, and how to support positive behaviors in children at home and in the classroom.

2. The use of the Early Screening Project (ESP)
The ESP is a screening instrument staff are using to recognize children at risk for serious emotional/behavioral disturbance. Such use has resulted in highly effective intervention strategies for children that previously would have gone undetected until much later in their development.

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3.Collaboration with UNM Special Education Department in five-year Research Project.

This project, funded jointly by the National Institute of Mental Health and the US Department of Health and Human Services, is developing and researching the effective use of prevention and intervention strategies in the areas of children's socio-emotional development. The project is now in its second year and uses stories, art, and drama to teach behavioral concepts such as listening, following instructions, sharing, negotiating, etc. Classroom work is extended into the home and parents become active partners in the project. By the end of the five year project, all teaching staff will have been trained in the project's approach to teaching positive behavior and the effects of the project will be studied as the children enter the public school system through the second grade.

In summary, YDI Head Start uses a holistic approach in providing services through Early Head Start/Head Start. Central to the approach is the extensive training and involvement of parents in all areas, the training and ongoing professional development of staff, the emphasis on the development of literacy skills through the 4 Block Literacy program, the development of a strong, supportive mental health delivery system for children, their families, and the staff, and the use of computer technology in the classroom to expand children's learning experience and capacity.

Gaps in Services and Additional Resources Required

Two major gaps exist in the provision of a seamless continuum of care for children. One is the small number of funded slots for Early Head Start. The weight of the research indicates that the development of sound parent/child bonding and the need for a stimulating, nurturing environment for children 0 – 3 is critical to later behavior. In addition, for Head Start to really be successful, all classes need to be full day, full year – for the sustained benefit of the children and for the ability of parents to participate in educational programs and full time employment.

There is also a need to provide competitive salaries that are commensurate with the professional level of the staff required for a successful Early Head Start/Head Start program. Teachers are parent, teacher, therapist, counselor are rolled into one. We – and the federal government – are rightfully

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requiring that they have professional degrees. While we applaud the resulting increase in quality services, we are also afraid that unless we significantly increase salaries we will lose our degreed staff to higher paying programs.

Before I close, I would like to say something else about drop out prevention and a program YDI has had an effort called Project Succeed for the past thirteen years. Approximately 750 at-risk students are served on a daily basis each year in Bernalillo, Sandoval, Valencia, and Santa Fe Counties. Although other publicly funded programs have an average dropout rate of 33%, Project Succeed retains 92% of the school's most at-risk-students. The approach is simple. Provide math and English courses for high school credit and limit the number of students in the classroom to 15. Provide a case manager to help the student find resources that will help them overcome obstacles that hinder their academic progress. Allow students to make up credit at an accelerated rate. Provide opportunities for paid employment and work experience. And provide GED preparation and tutoring for students that do not fit the traditional school system.

Realizing that there are many underlying issues that affect student performance in school, Youth Development, Inc. is committed to providing Project Succeed students with a service safety net. With a "continuum of care" approach, YDI is able to have a positive impact on youth and families from early childhood to adulthood. Project Succeed students can access services ranging from Head Start, Gang Intervention programs, Substance abuse counseling, crisis shelters, and individual and family counseling.

Project Succeed is an alternative to the traditional school approach. Young people, especially youth at-risk, deserve an opportunity to try something different. We have a responsibility to the community to continue the support for alternative programs that are separate from the traditional school system.

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APPENDIX H – WRITTEN STATEMENT OF PETER WINOGRAD, DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR TEACHER EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Facing the Challenges Facing Our Children

Peter Winograd, Director
Center for Teacher Education,
University of New Mexico

Presented at the Field Hearings of the House Representative Committee on Education and the Workforce

Albuquerque, New Mexico

January 24, 2000

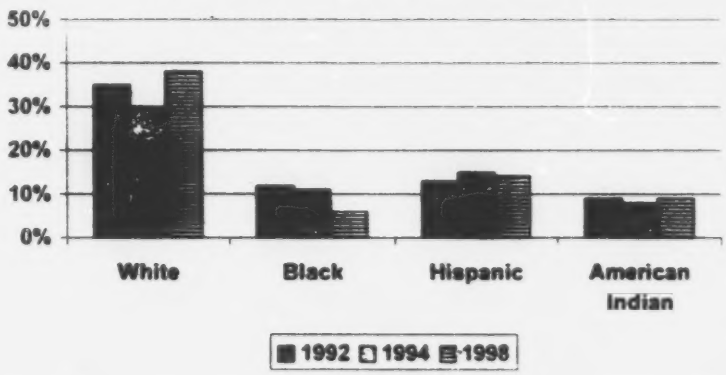
The Issue of Dropouts

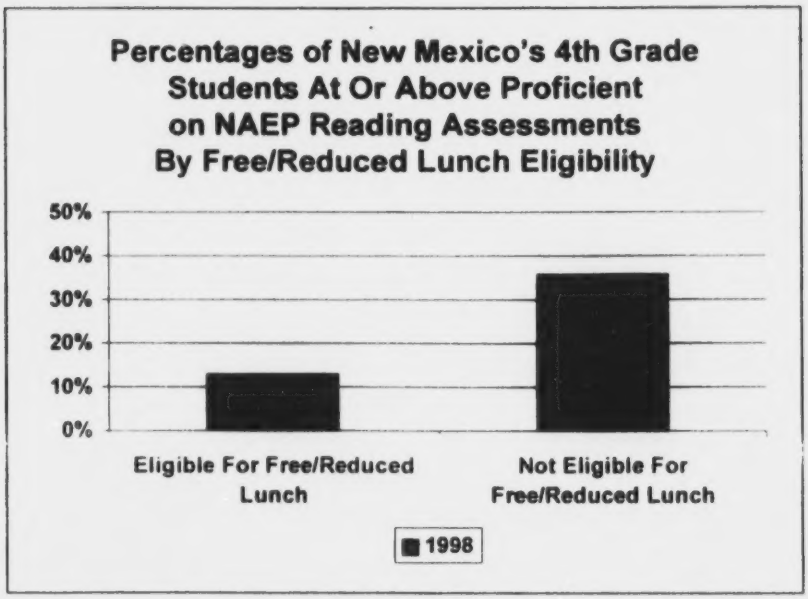
- What Do We Know About Dropouts?
- What Don't We Know About Dropouts?
- What Do We Need To Do?

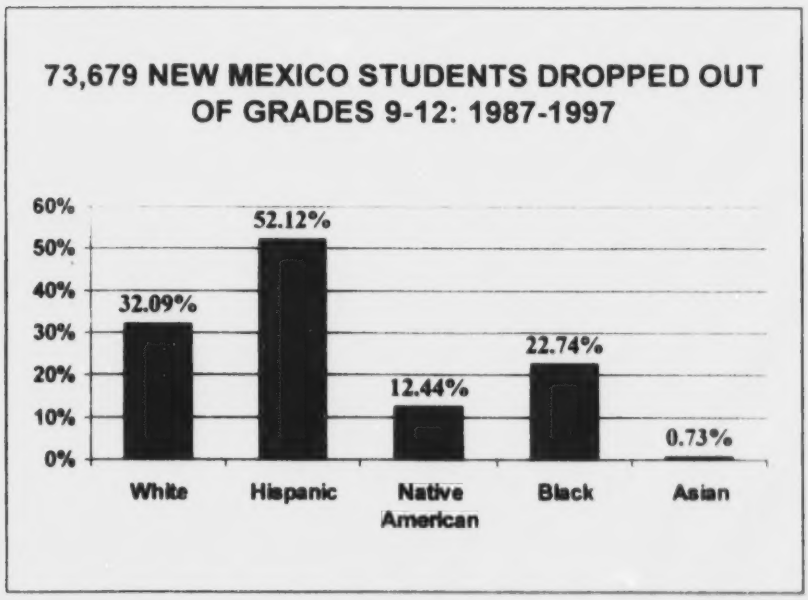
What Do We Know About Dropouts?

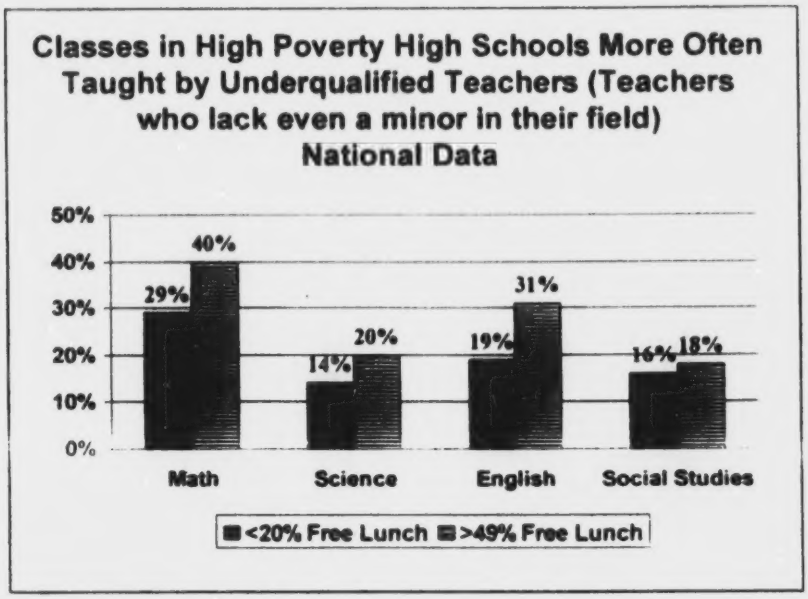
- We Know That We Lose Too Many Students
- We Know That Minority and Poor Students Drop Out At Higher Rates
- We Know That Students Begin To Drop Out Early
- We Know That Everyone Has A Responsibility
- We Know About Successful Programs
- We Know What Good Research Has Recommended

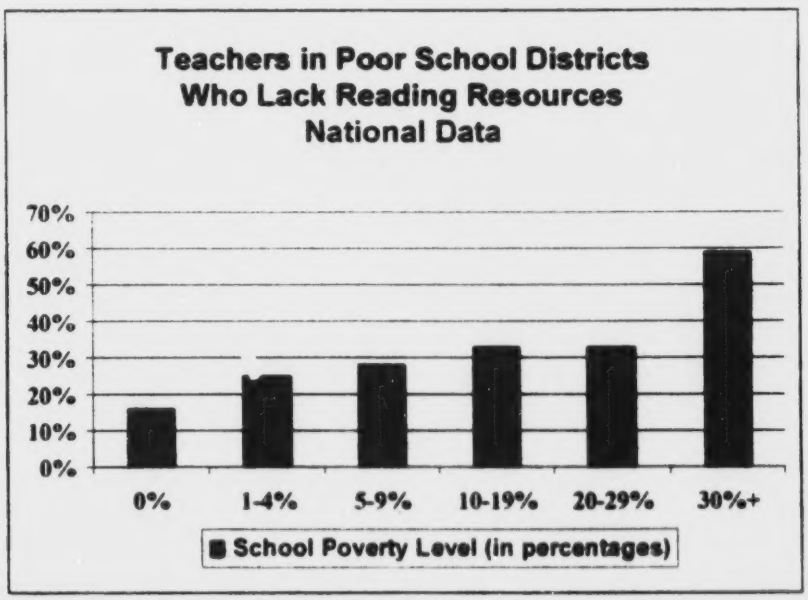
Percentages of New Mexico's 4th Grade Students At Or Above Proficient on NAEP Reading Assessments By Race/Ethnicity: 1992 to 1998




Percentages of New Mexico's 4th Grade Students At Or Above Proficient on NAEP Reading Assessments By Free/Reduced Lunch Eligibility
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
Eligible For Free/Reduced Lunch
Not Eligible For Free/Reduced Lunch
1998


73,679 NEW MEXICO STUDENTS DROPPED OUT OF GRADES 9-12: 1987-1997
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
32.09%
52.12%
12.44%
22.74%
0.73%
White
Hispanic
Native American
Black
Asian


Classes in High Poverty High Schools More Often Taught by Underqualified Teachers (Teachers who lack even a minor in their field)
National Data
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
29%
40%
14%
20%
19%
31%
16%
18%
Math
Science
English
Social Studies
<20% Free Lunch
>49% Free Lunch


Teachers in Poor School Districts Who Lack Reading Resources
National Data
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
0%
1-4%
5-9%
10-19%
20-29%
30%+
School Poverty Level (in percentages)

What Don't We Know About Dropouts?

- How To Define The Term Consistently
- How To Measure the Rate Consistently
- How To Take Successful Programs To Scale
- How To Build The Political Will and Leadership To Solve The Problem

What Do We Need To Do?

- We Need A Clear And Sustained Focus On Improving Public Education
- We Need A Clear And Sustained Focus On The Issue Of Dropouts
- We Need National Help In Definitions, Data Collection, Coordination, Problem Solving, And The Sharing Successful Models
- We Need Help Developing the Political Will To Address The Issue

APPENDIX I - WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DR. JOSEPH VIGIL, ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT, ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Addressing the Student Drop Out Problem in the Albuquerque Public Schools
Congressional Hearing
By Joseph Vigil, Associate Superintendent
January 24, 2000

The Albuquerque Public Schools have a mandate to pass on to young people a sense of responsibility and the skills to contribute productively to our community. This responsibility ultimately follows our youths into adulthood.

As the Albuquerque community begins finally to tackle the significant student dropout problem, our dedicated effort must demonstrate a collective responsibility for ensuring that all of our children participate in a successful and complete school experience.

In fact, the Albuquerque community adopted a citywide initiative in 1994 called Character Counts, and one of its tenets is responsibility. Now is the time to put this commitment into action in a meaningful way that strengthens our community.

Providing our youths with a complete educational experience means we have each played a meaningful role, proving how we have lived up to our responsibility in keeping our students in school until graduation. Students receiving a diploma would be demonstrating their commitment.

The road to dropping out

The road to dropping out begins long before a student actually quits participating as an active school member.

The process a child goes through when making the decision to drop out of school is often an emotional struggle, taking place over several years, that festers and grows like a cancer until the child finally makes that critical decision to not participate any longer. Sometimes, this decision is made for the child by actions that force the student to be excluded from participating.

Though the struggles children go through before dropping out of school are similar, the reasons students quit their school memberships can be very different.

A student who doesn't like school or is not getting along with people at the school, including teachers and classmates, is at high risk of dropping out. Other factors include a history of attendance problems because of truancy or suspensions, failing to move on to the next grade or failing one or more classes in school. In failing classes, reading problems are usually the most pronounced reasons for a student's poor achievement.

This is why it is so important to intervene when grades begin to slide and to communicate with parents, ensuring that adequate notice is given and support provided for their child who is falling behind academically.

Jobs in the next century hold great promise for young people who are prepared to work in a global economy. As it now stands, the 2,000 Albuquerque students who drop out each

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year will have little chance to play a meaningful part in this world, and all of us will pay a steep price if our school system does not radically improve the student graduation rate.

Children who drop out of school will earn significantly less than their high school graduate classmates and less than half of what a college graduate will make.

What students must do

Students must start by committing themselves to attending school regularly. They must be more selective of who their friends are, because who they "hang around" with is a good predictor of whether they will graduate.

Use of drugs and alcohol by students not only creates potential legal problems for them but also causes schools to take action to remove the user from the school.

In addition, students who are using drugs and alcohol are often out late at night and eventually don't complete homework assignments, don't get up the next morning for school and are ill-prepared to pay attention in class because of fatigue, even if they do make it.

Other potential dropouts choose the short-term benefits of work instead of doing homework, not realizing the huge financial benefits they are potentially squandering later on in life.

Students should also challenge themselves academically, including taking advanced math classes, and not settle for the minimum course requirements. In addition, students participating in two or more extracurricular school activities dramatically improve their chances of graduating.

What parents must do

Parents must demonstrate an active interest in the development of their child by taking responsibility to ensure their child attends school regularly, meaning the child attends school at least 95 percent of the time.

Parents must take the initiative to develop their parenting skills and educate themselves about child development and child rearing as needed.

Parents should dedicate part of their time to volunteer work in the school their child attends and participate in the important decisions made at the school. At a minimum, parents must ensure that television-viewing time for their child does not exceed the amount of time the child spends completing homework assignments.

Parents must also spend some time each day just talking with their children about the child's school progress.

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What teachers must do

Another key to improving student performance is to improve teacher performance, keeping in mind that the district has an overwhelming majority of teachers who are dedicated professionals working hard to educate all students.

More of teacher professional development must focus on the enormous number of underachieving students, even those who are not failing. Teacher incentives and sanctions must be established that hold them accountable for student achievement if a student is attending school regularly.

Teachers should follow students for two or more grades to ensure continuity of instruction, responsibility for student learning, and accountability for their performance.

The high student mobility in our district demands a consistency of instruction between schools. Teachers must therefore be more receptive to the use of a standard K-12 curriculum, so if a student moves from one part of the city to another, the class instructional materials will be familiar.

In addition, every teacher should strive to be nationally board certified. This certification is the best indicator that a veteran teacher has met rigorous standards of quality. Included in this provision should be demonstration of technology literacy for classroom instruction.

In addition, Albuquerque Public Schools should reward teachers who have demonstrated a high level of performance in the classroom and are nationally board certified. This also means there would be sanctions for those who are not performing at an acceptable level. Similar incentives and sanctions should be applied to administrators.

What schools must do

Through high-quality teaching, APS takes responsibility for providing students with high-quality schools. The high expectations and academic rigor clearly evident in every classroom define these high quality schools. And teachers in these schools know that raising expectations and standards without enriching and diversifying students' opportunities to learn will do more harm than good.

The high-quality school has professional study groups that address the educational needs of students through cooperative planning research and collaboration. Because of this level of professionalism, the school is not quick to "get rid" of students.

These high-quality schools provide comprehensive substance abuse education programs, wholesome academic and non-academic activities after school and require every student to participate in at least two of these activities.

Communication with parents is frequent, keeping parents informed of a child's progress and school initiatives. Students and the professional staff in high-quality schools are treated and treat others respectfully.

APS must be prepared to take responsibility for students who are attending school regularly and not learning. The necessary student support will ensure students attain achievement benchmarks at grades 3, 5, 7 and 9 and are able to pass the New Mexico Competency Exam as a prerequisite for entering high school. Students who do not attain the specified benchmarks at the designated grade levels should be required to participate in mandated accelerated learning centers designed to strengthen their academic performance.

To ensure that our students are successful, we must also provide a variety of options from which students can choose within their home school and within APS. We must also expand many of our successful alternative programs, eliminate those that are not effective and work more closely with the community in developing other alternatives that would support student success.

Comprehensive early childhood programs can strengthen much of our work in the later school years. Our work should be of such quality that we could guarantee students read at grade level after four years and good attendance in an APS program. If they can't read at grade level, the district should provide the necessary tutoring.

What the district must do

The Albuquerque Public Schools must articulate clear direction for our schools and high expectations of students and staff. A report card should be developed for every school that reflects the improvement trend based on a variety of effective school indicators. Rewards should be provided to schools that consistently exceed those expectations and sanctions imposed on those schools that are not adequately addressing the learning needs of our students.

High standards and appropriate assessments of student and staff performance must be in place with appropriate professional development that ensures high quality instruction is available for every child. In addition, our district must fairly compensate our professional staff to ensure we retain a high performing work force.

Providing information through technology

Obtaining information through technology is also a critical resource for restructuring how we operate our schools, teach, learn and evaluate. The use of technology for garnering information will transform what our schools look like, how they function and how people interact with the district.

Technology connects teachers and students and provides tools for changing how schools accomplish our goals. Albuquerque must take the lead among urban communities by ensuring every family has a computer for students to use, with access to the Internet so that learning opportunities are greatly expanded beyond the school boundaries. Access to information is a critical variable that would pay huge dividends for students at risk of dropping out.

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Business, government, others

The business community could provide support for our work by creating higher expectations from our students seeking employment. Requiring students to produce a report card indicating satisfactory academic progress and good school attendance as a condition of employment would be a great place to start.

Our government officials could assist by stringent enforcement of laws that address curfew, alcohol and violence. These officials would also ensure that assistance and support is available for students in distress.

Many community entities have offered their services through the years to support our school district. We must now align those resources with the focus on graduating significantly more of our students. Decreasing the dropout rate through meaningful and sustainable change only occurs when those impacted by the change are involved and invested in the change.

We are all impacted, and helping our students succeed is our collective responsibility. Together we will make a difference in the lives of our children.

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APPENDIX J - WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ROGER COX, PRESIDENT, ROGER COX & ASSOCIATES, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Roger Cox Testimony
Congresswoman Heather Wilson
Outlook for Education Field Hearing
January 24, 2000

Good morning/afternoon. My name is Roger Cox and I'm the president of Roger Cox & Associates, a real estate development company here in New Mexico.

The reason I'm speaking before you today is that I am part of a committee working to open a public charter high school in the East Mountains, in Sandia Park. This is an alternative to the city schools in Albuquerque and is designed along five primary concepts:

. All students must learn basic education prior to graduation, without social promotion or without passing a student along without the skills he or she needs.

Second, this is a small school, intended for just 400 high school students, grades 9 through 12. The teacher to student ratio is expected to be at 1: 15 and the counselor to student ratio is the same.

With this size, our kids will have access to what we've called a Student Advocacy Program -- an intense planning process that involves student, parents, teachers and community mentors in developing a total learning program for the student -- one that includes academics but also life planning.

A fourth aspect of the school is community service and the ideals of civic responsibility. The students will take part in a community needs alliance and learn how to tap into the existing resources to make a critical and helpful change in their community.

Finally, this strong traditional school will use technology as an enabler, not another class, for students. Each child will be provided with a laptop computer to facilitate research, application and networking with students in other top-notch schools. Multidisciplinary learning, combining technology and history and art and civics and math and reading and writing, will be the rule of every class.

So what stands in the way of getting this school off the ground?

. Adequate, flexible financing for leasing and building of school facilities. In our particular area there aren't strip malls and empty buildings to place the school, so we must build. The bottom line is that someone must personally guarantee the mortgage for the building at exorbitant rates -- over 9 percent for commercial structure. These are schools that need to be paying less than $10 a square foot for facilities.

. Secondly, because charter schools are new in our state, there is a lot of learning going on during the process. There isn't a template for gaining stimulus funds at the state level. And the federal stimulus funds are administered by the state. In our state, the exact formula or format has yet to be determined. Recently we put together the state stimulus fund proposal -- which the Department of Education basically threw out and asked for a blanket funding of each school -- which the State Board of Education refused and determined to allocate the funds on a per capita basis. In other words, the notion of simplicity, reducing complexity and increasing efficiency disappeared in good intentions.

It's easy to find fault. Less simple is finding answers. We have two points we would like to offer.

. Streamline the funding for facilities by offering some type of incentive to financial institutions to get their charter school products, at traditional commercial rates, out there now.

. Rather than adding complexity, remember simplicity. The more complex the funding formula, the more extensive the "competition", the more sophisticated the demand, the harder to get volunteers to commit their efforts to making these schools happen.

In closing, I'd like to point out that the community energy and effort behind the East Mountain Charter High School has been extensive. People have provided their own personal money to make this school happen. The program is one that calls on the best traits of education as it applies to our community, as determined by our community. While time will tell the final story on charter schools, we believe, passionately, that this school will be among the nation's best.

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APPENDIX K - WRITTEN STATEMENT OF J. ALAN MARKS, EDUCATIONAL CONSULTANT, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Testimony of Alan Marks

Alan Marks
South Valley Charter High School
240 Valley High School
Albuquerque, NM 87105
Phone/fax 505-877-3150
Email jamar@unm.edu

I have two main comments regarding retention and student performance. The first I would like to situate primarily within the context of charter schools, since I am in the process of beginning one now. In essence, I think most public schools, at least high schools, are too large to give students a sense of belonging. The students often lack a trusting relationship with their mentors, are frustrated academically, are alienated socially, and gradually they withdraw. The staff is likewise frustrated and alienated for several reasons listed below, and, due to the scale and organization of the institution, cannot compensate for the despair of the students.

Let me illustrate by my experience at a large high school of about 2500 students over a 14-year period. Typically I would see a 9th grade student (let's call her Carla) in my first period class and never again for the rest of the day. And I might never see her again for the next three years. No matter how supportive I might be in my class, Carla might very well feel very alone in her high school experience. My expectations might not jibe with expectations of other teachers, she might become frustrated with what is expected of her, and her self-confidence might plummet as she experienced defeats in different facets of her school life. Meanwhile, as you well know, events outside of school may ultimately undermine her academic success, lacking that caring, coherent climate at school.

Let me return to Carla after I describe the same situation from the perspective of a teacher. Given the constraints of size, I might see 150 different students a year and 600 over the four years Carla is there. It is daunting for me, the 9th grade English teacher to feel that I am an

integral part of the life of each student who passes through my classroom. I want to know how each is doing in other classes and what common themes of achievement or attitude run through her classes. But I don't know that. Nor do I know what happens to her after my freshman English class. I have 150 new students to worry about. While there is some alignment of curriculum within academic departments, and I stress only some, there is little if any discussion between departments to make the curriculum more coherent, more organic, more meaningful. And socially, there is little communication across departments about the needs of any given child. As such, I feel isolated and frustrated myself in my mission to really make a difference in the lives of my students, to help them see the links that tie this process we call education together, and to help guide them through this demanding process.

Back to Carla. Lacking integrated, coherent curriculum, Carla may feel she is struggling to find her way through a labyrinth of 24 unrelated strands. And lacking consistent adult mentors in this process, she may feel very hopeless about finding an adult who can understand her fragmentation and frustration.

The above description barely begins to address the problems caused by huge educational institutions. Although better administration and organization can address some of the issues I raised, really they are endemic to these large institutions. We all know that research has shown that smaller schools provide the security and attention to the academic and social needs of students, that students perform better and teachers are more satisfied with their ability to provide a school family for their students. But we aren't seeing a programmatic shift to small schools. That is where effective, alternative models become critical.

In our charter high school, for example, we will have a small core of teachers who escort students all the way through their high school experience. We can anticipate problems and deal

with them quickly and thoroughly. We can keep parents informed about any inconsistencies because we work daily with these students throughout the four years. We can have high standards for all, but can chart improvement in such a way as to make a low achieving student feel challenged and self-confident about her progress. Essentially we form a school family that is consistent, coherent, and caring. We gain our coherence because, as a small school, we meet and plan together daily. Our curriculum is thematically linked so that a real world problem which students can get their teeth into gives meaning to abstractions such as math or social studies. Students who feel acknowledged, encouraged, and cared for are much more likely to stay in school and experience academic success. And I attribute most of this success to a human scale, a small school.

That brings me to a key point. What are the constraints that keep these useful pilots and alternative schools from being as effective as they should be? The primary constraint we have found for charter schools is that we lack a facility. Unless there is an empty school building around, we are confronted with a terrible dilemma. Assuming we can even find a facility to lease, shall we use a huge chunk of our operational budget to pay for that lease, and then with our correspondingly reduced budget render inferior services to our students? And what about the long term? As long as we continue to pay for our lease and our operational expenses, we will never have the chance to create a permanent facility that truly embodies our charter.

In our case, in the poor barrio where we are locating, there really aren't any suitable buildings that we could even afford to renovate to lease except in distant strip malls, and even those would be well beyond our means to renovate. We will end up leasing portable buildings and hoping to find a site with infrastructure for hook-ups. We think we may be able to partner with the county for the use of a vacant site across from a community center. But what do we do

for the long term. We are a poor community, and, as you are well aware, we have no authority to float a bond to raise capital for a building. What we need to find, and what you might consider recommending, is some source of funds for loans for capital improvements. Our community, though poor in wealth, is rich in enthusiasm and commitment. They are willing to put in thousands of hours to help us make this alternative public high school a reality. But the limiting factor is access to capital. Please consider a resolution of this issue as one significant path to improve student retention and achievement that your committee could propose.

My second point, which I will keep brief, is that many students become frustrated with school and fail to achieve because the goals are very fuzzy. In sports and music and other arenas, the benchmarks are clear and the assessment of where the student is and how she is improving are much more evident. There is usually even an analysis of what the weaknesses are. Furthermore there is general agreement about the value of the benchmarks. You know if you can shoot 3-point baskets or serve an overhand serve in volleyball or play an A-flat. The goal is fairly concrete.

In school, I am afraid we have a long ways to go to make the goals both clear and worthy. I am reminded of "Cool Hand Luke" when Luke is told by a supervisor to take the dirt out of a hole in the ground. The next supervisor asks him what he is doing and tells him to fill that hole. And then the first returns and wants to know why the dirt hasn't been removed. There is much ambiguity about what constitutes good student performance within schools. Students sometimes lack the resiliency of Paul Newman, and give up when nothing they do seems to meet the fuzzy benchmark. I think we have a long ways to go in our so-called standards movement. I don't think we are clear about what students should achieve, are not convincing about the relevance of these

benchmarks, and rarely if ever do we assess these goals. When we do assess them on some huge standardized test, we rarely analyze these results and use them to help students analyze and overcome weaknesses.

The model I would like to suggest is clear goal-setting at the level of the individual student and frequent assessment so that students can see their improvement. The poorest student will become excited when she knows and understands the goal and sees and understands her improvement. There is so much more to say about this topic which is my passion, but I think the point is raised. You should be able to walk into any classroom in the US and ask any student:

- to name five specific skills/concepts that are essential for that class,
- to assess how she is doing and how much she has improved, and
- to explain the importance of the benchmarks to her life.

In a world where students can answer those three questions, I think you will find far less dropouts and much higher achievement.

APPENDIX L - WRITTEN STATEMENT OF CAPTAIN J. CRAIG McCLURE, DANFORTH FELLOW, UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO, SIERRA ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

TESTIMONY FOR THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE

BY: J. CRAIG McCLURE
BOX 28, Edgewood, N.M.
87015

I am here primarily to speak to the importance of providing alternative schooling opportunities to our young citizens. Common sense dictates that the far-reaching and dramatic ways that our society has changed in the last forty years are having significant impact on public education. To meet the demands of these changes our schools must change to keep pace. One of the most effective tools to meet our taxpayers' expectations is a community-oriented alternative school.

These schools lower the dropout rate and save at-risk students who might otherwise fall through the cracks of a society seemingly stuck in an intensely competitive ultra-fast paced mode. Most of our alternative students are unable to effectively operate in a large impersonal environment; as one would most likely find at city high schools. By creating a classroom and a campus that is small and personal, we as a staff are able to provide a more individualistic service to these students than our larger schools can.

The reasons that young people find themselves grasping at alternative programs as their last hope are as complex and multifaceted as our society itself. There are however some common factors in making an alternative

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task rather than letting them set the pace, tone and direction of the government. Pass no legislation that would further hinder honest parents from raising their families, while we at the state level will work with the judicial branches to hold negligent parents responsible if their children injure and harm others.

Lastly, whenever possible do away with the ever-expanding Federal behemoth. Red tape entangles the hundreds of grants coming out of Washington D.C. Help us by cutting away that red tape, ridding us of the bureaucrats that administer them, and leave it up to the individual states to administer those funds as they see fit. Here I will briefly mention the Federal role in special education. I believe that the Federal Government has overstepped their bounds in their involvement with behavioral disordered students, effectively tying the hands of special ed. teachers and administrators. This results in a more dangerous campus. The states know best what's best for them. And I would ask that you take this back to the capital: I hope all members of Congress, residents of the White House, and every political person in a position of power and public trust become more aware of their own responsibilities as role models. Each time our students observe corruption, poor character, and dishonest behavior by the leaders of

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school successful. What follows is, in my experience, the five most important:

- Design a flexible school with a small teacher/pupil ratio. Traditional scheduling can not meet the needs of many of today's high school students or parents.
- Make the students accountable with a well-defined framework of understood expectations and boundaries. Discipline is not a dirty word; it is both necessary and welcomed by the students.
- Create a culture of community by involving the families and neighbors of your school and its children.
- Foster a sense of belonging and an atmosphere that reflects and produces quality of character, self-discipline, self-denial and most importantly respect and love for others.
- The curriculum should stress academics and reasoning skills based on building a portfolio of tools that students see as realistic and applicable, thereby enhancing their employability and success in life.

I would feel remiss were I not to address the main reasons our schools are not meeting the expectations of our citizenry. These are my personal beliefs and do not represent the official point of view of APS, the University of

New Mexico, or my school. We as educators can only do so much. We can not alone repair the entire fabric of a society that has been torn in many directions. Parents have the primary responsibility to create successful students and respectable members of their community. Our job as teachers is to help families educate and guide children, not raise them ourselves. Can anyone deny that the permissive and subdivided society we have today is not an integral part of these students' problems?

The music, video games, movies, and news glorifies and embellishes violence, drugs and reckless narcissism while desensitizing young people to others' suffering with barbaric and irresponsible messages. Many parents are confused by a contradictory legal system that holds them civilly responsible for their childrens' misbehavior but threatens criminal punishment if they take disciplinary steps themselves.

What you as legislators and representatives can do is stop and reconsider with great care prior to passing yet another fallacious law. Don't give in to knee-jerk reactions when the press sensationalizes "school violence", creating yet another law restricting the rights of honest citizens. Knowing full well that young people have had access to guns since the founding of this nation, ask instead what has changed to produce such uncivilized and irresponsible behavior in our youth. Take the press and popular media to

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this nation, it makes it that much harder for us as teachers to instill an ethical standard in America's next generation of citizens.

Almost twenty years ago, *A Nation At Risk* addressed many of these same issues. Americans felt then as now; the role of the Federal Government should be to foster and supplement education. They understood that we derive strength from our pluralistic society, but they also noted that we as groups and individuals must exercise "patriotism" first if we are to come together in joint cooperation to better this country's schools.

In 1816 Thomas Jefferson said, "If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be." No one can deny, and let no one forget, the tremendous and valiant efforts by teachers to educate and prepare students for their future, despite dangerous work environments, unrecognized after-hours labor, and embarrassingly low pay. If we sacrifice some of our individual pursuits and come together as communities, churches, neighbors and families there is nothing we can not accomplish. I wish to thank the members of this body for allowing me to address these important issues.

Capt J Craig McClure, 12605 Hugh Graham Rd. NE, Albuquerque, N.M. 87111 (1-21-00)

APPENDIX M - WRITTEN STATEMENT OF GEOFF JOSLIN, STUDENT, SIERRA ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Geoff Joslin
3801 Grew. Chevrault N.E. 8

Hi I was one of the
kids that was going to slip through
the cracks, and become a high school
dropout statistic.
In the fall of 1999 I [redacted]
broken my foot and because of [redacted]
pain medication I was unable to
go to school for awhile, I started it.
To top it all off, my family
was going through some rough times,
My school [redacted] me I [redacted]
can't go back until the new semester
starts in January. I knew then if
I had that long of a time off I would
never go back. My girlfriend had told
me she would never date a drop out
and my parents really wanted me
to stay in school. Finally my
counselor said there is a program
that can help, but it only works
if you want it too. I said I'd
give it a shot. I started in Mr. McClure's
Fresh Start Program and realized it was
more disapline, same work if not more
challenging, and stricter attendence,
but I had a flexiable schedule.

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It enabled me to get a part time job to help my family. It seemed easier for me, because I knew all the teachers and you could ask them for help anytime, but I [redacted] rarely needed because of [redacted] one on one teaching. It also [redacted] credit for my part time job. I [redacted] wasn't for the program at Irvine [redacted] the people, I wouldn't be in front [redacted] you today.

We need Alternative sch[redacted] I speak for kid that need [redacted] a break and do want to graduate.

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APPENDIX N - WRITTEN STATEMENT OF G. P. JOSLIN, MOTHER, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Hi, my name is G.P. Joslin. I've been in the Albuquerque Public School system for 13 ½ years with my two sons. My oldest son graduated in 1999. My younger son Geoff is at Sierra Alternative School.

He started in the Fresh Start Program last year because of a few too many absences. He had severely broken his foot in five places and it was coupled with a family crisis. He wasn't really motivated for school at that time. When his high school informed me in October that he would have to leave and not start again until January when the new semester started, I was not pleased. When you give a kid that kind of time off, he's not going to want to go back. His high school counselor said there was one last resort—The Fresh Start Program. He said that it was for kids that had a few too many absences or let their ditching get out of hand for whatever reason. We had a conference with the people that ran Fresh Start. They decided Geoff would be accepted into the program but no tolerance would be allowed on ditching or unexcused absences. Geoff did very well in the program. He connected with a few great teachers and got caught up on his credits and he even got a part-time job.

Geoff continued to work all summer. When the new school year started he didn't want to go back to his old high school. He felt he didn't get the attention he got at the Fresh Start Program. He told me he would rather drop out then go to school. I could not have that. I was willing to compromise. I thought he should get a G.E.D, but a very special teacher at Sierra had told Geoff he could come back to Sierra if it didn't work out at his other school.

Geoff decided to stay in school and took the teacher up on his offer. Geoff does very well and is challenged in most of his classes with the personalized attention.

Alternative Schools are a key to the future of some of our children. So many of our kids are falling through the cracks. We have to have a system or way for these kids. A lot of kids do want to graduate. They do want to finish school. We have to help them achieve this.

Ms. G.P. Joslin
3801 General Chennault Street N.E.
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87111
Phone: (505) 275-2709

APPENDIX O – SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD, LETTER OF 1/21/00, TO CONGRESSWOMAN HEATHER WILSON, FROM TOM R. & VINITA F. HOPKINS, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Tom R. & Vinita F. Hopkins
4106 Tara Ct. NE
Albuquerque, NM 87111
Phone 505-294-2701
Fax 505-296-9325
Trhopkins@aol.com

Friday, January 21, 2000

Congresswoman Wilson
625 Silver Ave., SW, Suite 340
Albuquerque, NM 87102

Dear Congresswoman Wilson:

I want to commend you for getting the House Education and Work Force Committee to meet in Albuquerque on Monday.

As for myself, I am a professional educator with specialties in the evaluation of Native American education programs and in the teacher education of Native Americans. I have a doctorate in Education from The George Washington University, Washington, DC.

I am concerned with the widespread misuse of standardized tests. Having worked on the evaluation of Native American education for 45 years and having observed first-hand how culturally unfair standardized tests are to the culturally different Native Americans, I believe it is time something be done to correct the situation.

The makers of standardized tests have never claimed they are adequate to assess a total education program, only parts of it and then only parts of the parts. Such tests are valuable to professional educators when used in a culturally fair and professional manner. However, as they are currently being used in many states they reflect terrible unfairness and do gross damage to our excellent public education programs throughout the nation.

To be specific, in my research on education I have over the years found, without fail, that one gets what is paid for. For example, if you fund remedial courses to prepare Indian or any student for college and a degree you instead get remedial courses but not an increase in Indian college graduates. If you fund a high stakes testing program, such as in North Carolina, to improve achievement in reading, writing and arithmetic you don't get increased achievement, you get a testing program. The elementary curriculum is being replaced by a testing program. Dramatically less time is spent on history, government, art, etc. What about the teaching of democracy which for most of the 20th century was the basic function of American public education? It is lowered in priority to the testing program which usually is statutory. I question whether a testing program can be translated into the

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teaching of democracy. In this case, the use of standardized tests represent something of a threat to the teaching of democracy.

I read in the Albuquerque Journal this morning about a new program to test teachers. It is assumed the test will make better teachers. As long as standardized tests have been used to test teachers there is not one shred of empirical evidence that they improve the quality of teaching and/or student learning.

I evaluated the Navajo-Ford Foundation Teacher Education Program from 1992-1998. Last month I received the final returns of questionnaires (three year follow-up) on the 1996 and 1997 graduates. There have been over 300 Navajo classroom aides move into the professional ranks in this program. All of these graduates are fluent and literate in the Navajo language. A first in Navajo education. Pertaining to New Mexico, the graduates must take the National Teacher Exam (NTE) and now this new one, neither of which do anything to improve the quality of teaching. And, both of which are culturally unfair to Navajos and other Native Americans. In this last batch of returns there was one teacher who was teaching Navajo language in a New Mexico elementary school and was fired because she could not pass the NTE. Can you image a school offering Navajo language and culture to Navajo children taught by a teacher fluent and literate in Navajo and she looses her job because she could not pass the European culture based NTE? This happened this past fall, 1999.

I know that such standardized tests are a state requirement and often one of a local school board, which the Committee is quite rightly reluctant to challenge What I would like the Committee to consider is taking the lead on developing standards and/or policies to assist schools nationally in being culturally fair to innocent culturally different students of all ages who must take standardized tests. I am not suggesting that the current standardized tests with roots in Western European culture be abandoned. I am suggesting that their be some fairness mandated when they are used, which should be a statutory and/or regulatory requirement, to assess culturally different children and youth.

I am not asking that the baby be thrown out with the bath, but that some national fairness doctrine, something binding, be developed by the House Education and Workforce committee.

Navajos (and other Native Americans), attend schools with a curriculum based on Western European culture. There is nothing wrong with this. On the other hand, there are no state mandated bi-cultural curricula to accompany the main European one. This means that a Navajo who attends school must respond as a non-Navajo to get along and pass all grades. The Navajo (other Indians as well) never get any education credit for being Navajo. Based on my experience, they are always penalized for being Navajo, regardless of the school. I don't think this is fair, but more importantly, it can be corrected.

How does one go about developing cultural fairness in testing? I suggest that, to begin with, the Navajo Nation be awarded one million dollars a year for

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three years to develop a "Fairness in Testing Policy and Procedures," for the Navajos. There are a sufficient number of Navajos with professional credentials who are capable of helping the Committee with such a task. I am confident the Navajos can effectively collaborate with other Native Americans to make a national impact and bring fairness to the standardized testing situation.

Congresswoman Wilson, thanks for the opportunity to share my thoughts and experiences with you and the Committee.

Sincerely yours,

Tom Hopkins

Tom Hopkins, Ed. D.

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APPENDIX P – SUBMITTED FOR THE REOCRD, STATEMENT OF TONY MONFILETTO, TOM SIEGEL AND TERRY HOGAN, AMY BIEHL CHARTER SCHOOL, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

January 24, 2000

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute this written testimony to the Committee hearing this afternoon. We commend the Congress for recognizing the pressing needs of our school children. We will start our comments by establishing the premise that most students, parents, and teachers do not function well in the large urban schools. In our comprehensive high schools we try to offer a little something for everyone, but very little of what students need most—nurturing. Our schools cannot care for our students when we try to serve more than 2,000 of them at a time. This many students turn our schools into a factories where bureaucracies must be created to handle the education process. In this system students become interchangeable, and although it may sound trite, they do "get lost" and "fall through the cracks."

The most likely alternative to the big school is being proposed by a few educational entrepreneurs around the United States. Charter schools (public schools that function outside the administrative and policy making authority of a school district) have been created or are currently being planned by teachers and parents. In Albuquerque proposals have been offered for three schools to be created for approximately 300 students a piece. If these schools are implemented successfully, they will not only help to solve the problems of the students who attend them, but they will also help the students who attend existing schools by making their schools smaller. It could be a winning scenario for all involved.

The most significant problem with the charter school alternative for the children of New Mexico is the lack of adequate funding to create these schools. At least six, and possibly eight charter schools will be created statewide for the 2000-2001 school year. These schools must share less than $1.0 million in funding provided by the state for all start-up costs—legal and architectural fees, books, furniture, equipment, technology and a facility. The financial situation would not be so dire if Federal charter school funding was available in our state. However, because of a problem with the way the law was drafted in our state Federal revenue is not an option.

Local school districts build schools with local property tax revenue while the charter schools must depend upon the state for its funding. In a national study that was published by the Pioneer Institute for the Massachusetts Charter School Resource Center, it was determined that school facilities are the most significant barrier to creating charter schools. The study entitled Charter School Facility Financing: Constraints and Options found that, "Because of the structure and limited amount of their public financing, the biggest problem confronting charter schools at this point in their evolution is obtaining and paying for permanent facilities." When one considers that new high schools cost more than $35 million to build, it is not reasonable to expect the six to eight charter schools in New Mexico to meet the facilities challenge with approximately $150,000 a piece. Even if Federal revenue matched the state contribution, the support would still be insufficient. A substantial Federal contribution would greatly enhance our ability to provide a quality educational alternative for students who need us.

Solutions to problems associated with big impersonal schools are being developed by teachers and parents. The same people who know most about the needs of our nation's children. However, charter school founders need additional resources to put their solutions into action. Many states have a proven track record with this educational alternative. I encourage this committee to increase its commitment to provide the resources to allow charter schools to flourish.

Tony Monfiletto, Tom Siegel and Terry Hogan
Amy Biehl Charter School
PO Box 8188
Albuquerque, New Mexico
87198

APPENDIX Q – SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD, LETTER OF 1/25/00, TO CONGRESSWOMAN HEATHER WILSON, FROM TRINA VALDEZ, TITLE I DIRECTOR, PORTALES MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS, PORTALES, NEW MEXICO

Portales Municipal Schools
501 SOUTH ABILENE STREET
PORTALES, NM 88130
356-5347

JAN 2 7 2000

January 25, 2000

Honorable Heather Wilson
625 Silver Ave. SW, Suite 340
Albuquerque, NM 87102

I am writing to voice my concern regarding a primary problem in education that has not defined, addressed, nor corrected, even though it has been staring us in the face for more than ten years. I am specifically referring to inadequate teacher preparation in the most important area of education--teaching reading.

The most important function of an elementary or secondary teacher, despite the content major, **is to teach reading.** The ability to read is (and should be) a fundamental skill. However, **nearly half** the 44 million public school children cannot read well. The nation's Reading Report Card showed that in 1994, 41% of fourth-graders were reading below grade level, as were 31% of eighth-graders and 25% of high school seniors. **Although appalling, these statistics are not surprising since teachers are not adequately prepared to teach reading.**

We must accompany the vision of a literate America with sound, fundamental pedagogical reading methodology by institutions of higher learning for students seeking a degree/career in education. Private and public schools charge our teachers with the responsibility of producing a nation of readers, yet teachers cannot meet this charge because they receive extremely limited preparation in the teaching of reading. University instruction is absolutely the culprit for this dilemma. If universities fail to provide a strong literacy foundation, teachers will continue to grapple for answers on how to teach reading. The standard courses of study and curriculum that state universities are currently providing, only produce ineffective teachers.

These prospective teachers lack the most important discipline of their training in education–how to teach reading. Universities do not provide a strong reading foundation in their bachelors' program and the majority have cut their Masters in Reading program. Failing to see the importance of providing reading course work, universities have reduced or eliminated the required courses--effectively disabling teachers from learning how to teach reading.[1] The myriad of required genre is general and nonspecific to one of the most important learning tasks in the classroom. College students (prospective teachers) naively trust universities (and pay good money) to provide the training they will need to effectively teach and prepare students. Instead, they receive a liberal arts education. Universities do not provide specific training that prepares these prospective teachers to develop successful, literate students.[2]

It is imperative that secondary and elementary education majors master how to teach reading. If we are to effectively prepare future teachers, then we must prepare them to "teach reading"... this must be done at the bachelors level; before student teaching, and definitely before entering the teaching profession. **I am, therefore, vehemently advocating that a *minimum* of 18 specific, rigorous, reading credit hours be required prior to the student teaching experience;** and that **the reading course work currently taught at the masters level (like Ohio State course work), be required at the bachelors level for both elementary and secondary teachers.**

Eighteen hours may seem excessive, but it is **minimal considering the financial burden that is placed on public school districts because they must re-train teachers in the fundamentals that should have received prior to their student teaching!!**

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The financial burden (and the perceived educational fault) therefore, is misdirected to public schools. All of the "re-training and professional development" is expensive and time consuming, i.e. the Reading Recovery program, offered at Ohio State, requires an intense course of study of *one year* (and an intensive follow up) before teachers can practice. The Reading Recovery training will cost a district seventy thousand dollars plus to train one teacher trainer. Granted there are other programs, but they are also very pricey. Portales Schools is sending three teachers to TEXAS (there are NO universities in NM that have a professor who can deliver this training, therefore we have to export NM dollars to another state in order to help the lowest 10% of our student population) to train using the Reading Recovery method for a cost of over $16,000. **Money that could have been used to polish teachers instead of providing basic (remedial) fundamental teaching skills.**

Simply put, school districts should not have to invest in this type of money for fundamental training that students should have received at universities. It is imperative that universities shift teacher education courses from a generalist education degree to one that enables teachers to acquire specialized reading skills. If an additional year is needed for teacher preparation, then by-golly, ensure they get that additional year! We must prepare our teachers to teach reading effectively.

How Teachers Currently Learn to Teach Reading

The majority of teachers learn (because they have been ill prepared) to teach reading through the reading basal adopted by their district. "Reading textbook" companies produce the basal and the teacher's guide which offers ideas and step-by-step instruction on how to present to students the reading story and what questions to ask. Unfortunately, these books tend to be trendy, adapting the philosophy of the current buzz words in education. **But most importantly** is the fact that this situation (of teachers presenting reading lessons prepared by "reading textbook" companies) places teachers and students at the mercy of the "reading textbook" companies and **if the textbook is weak in reading methodology, so is the teacher**. Furthermore, because of the number of teachers' complaining about the difficulty of teaching reading from these "textbooks", the readability level of the delivered curriculum has been "dumb downed" by publishing companies. I cannot blame the book companies; they need to sell books. **But, they do not have expertise nor the responsibility to teach teachers to teach reading... universities do!**

I know that this is lengthy, that we are all very busy and I thank you for taking the time to read my perspective on an important subject! My hope is that you are in a position to help correct this situation.

Respectfully Submitted,

Trina Valdez

Trina Valdez, Title I Director

1. (Please refer to any copy of the professional education course requirements for prospective teachers from four-year universities. Notice that, at best, they require only three college credits as part of the reading course work. This is supposed to effectively "prepare" teachers?)

2. (Again, please refer to any state university catalogue and observe the difference in the course requirements in other majors as compared with education majors. The science and communication requirements, for instance, are more specific and therefore those courses prepare students more effectively. Conversely, requirements for elementary education majors list instead a non specific, spattering of "jack-of-all-trades" courses.

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APPENDIX R – SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD, LETTER OF 1/24/00, TO CONGRESSWOMAN HEATHER WILSON, FROM MARY LOU CAMERON, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION-NEW MEXICO, SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION ◆ NEW MEXICO

Mary Lou Cameron
President
Eduardo Holguin
Vice President

Roger D. Montgomery
Executive Director
Donna Ullman
Associate Executive Director

January 24, 2000

Representative Heather Wilson
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515—3101

Dear Representative Wilson:

NEA and NEA-New Mexico have long been in the forefront of developing field-based dropout prevention strategies. In the 1980's NEA's foundation, the Nation Foundation for the Improvement of Education (NFIE), funded two New Mexico dropout prevention programs in Los Lunas and in Clayton. NFIE continues to work with practitioners across the country to develop research-based dropout solutions. The projects funded by NEA indicate that there is no simple single answer to the dropout problem. Rather, the research points to the application of a consistent set of strategies, an adherence to a specific set of values, the importance of a sense of mission and purpose, and the significance of keeping the child at the center of the program as the common denominators of dropout prevention.

Some other important learnings from NFIE's field projects indicate:

- How high students reach depends in great part on how high they believe they can go.
- How effective a dropout prevention program becomes depends on the backing it receives from the broader school community.
- How well students learn and how motivated they are to want to learn—to test their creativity and to satisfy their curiosity by embracing problems and seeing solutions—is linked to how well they are nurtured at home and in the early years of schooling.
- How effective a school district is in its mission to lower the dropout rate and to educate workers and citizens for a global economy and technologically advanced society is often dependent on how well various segments of the community work together.
- How engaged children are in their schooling and how likely they are to continue learning for a lifetime is strongly influenced by the respect and priority education receives in the home.

NEA-New Mexico requests that the publication, *A Blueprint for Success, Lessons Learned: NFIE's Dropout Prevention Initiative,* be placed in the record of the committee hearing. This publication summarizes much of the field research in dropout prevention conducted by NEA's local affiliates over the last few years.

Sincerely,

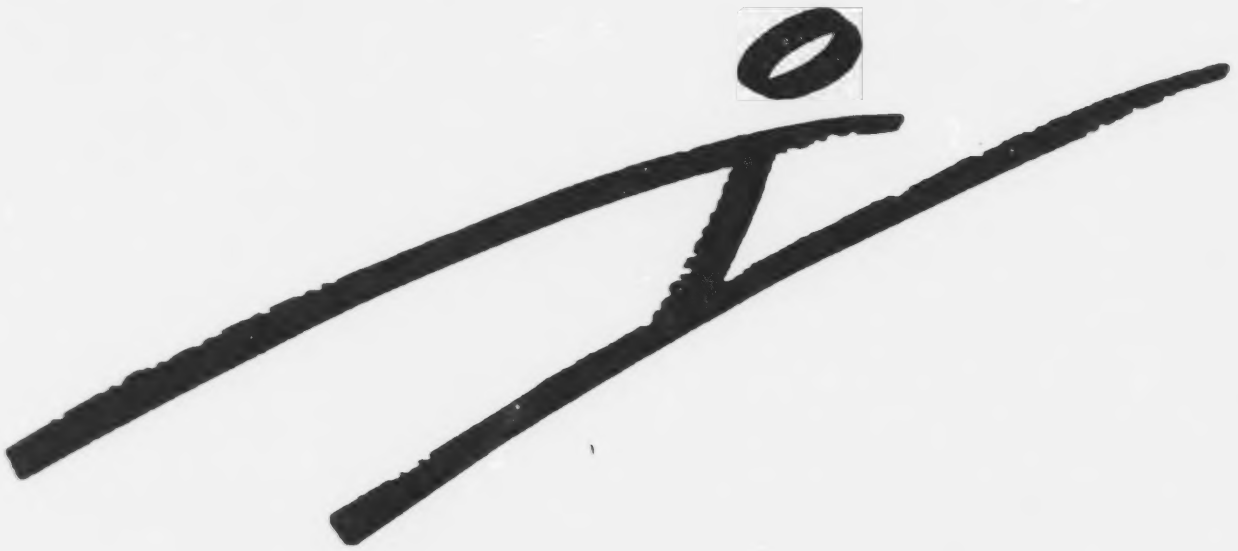
Mary Lou Cameron

Mary Lou Cameron,
President

Attachments for the House Committee on Education and the Workforce

130 South Capitol ◆ P.O. Box 729 ◆ Santa Fe, New Mexico ◆ 87504-0729 ◆ (505) 982-1916 ◆ FAX (505) 982-6719*2

A BLUEPRINT FOR SUCCESS



FILE No. 064

NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF EDUCATION 1990

PARTNERS AND SUPPORT

Young people dropping out of school is society's concern. The National Foundation for the Improvement of Education has had many partners in its effort to develop and implement successful dropout prevention programs nationwide.

Among NFIE's partners have been funders:

ARCO Foundation
Barney Gorustein, Carr and Gorustein
Bristol-Myers Fund
Edna McConnell Clark Foundation
Horace Mann Insurance Companies
MBNA, North America
Time-Warner, Inc.
United Resources

Special thanks goes to the following funders, who have contributed in special ways:

Sears-Roebuck Foundation, which, in addition to funding, encouraged local store personnel to become involved and helped to develop the early intervention concept.

The Prudential Foundation, which provided opportunities for education professionals and community leaders to work together to strengthen their resources and expertise as well as the funding to implement their programs.

The National Education Association, whose members contributed $1.7 million to launch the dropout prevention effort, and whose continued support builds NFIE's endowment, thus allowing NFIE to continue its Dropout Prevention Program.

The printing of this publication was made possible through a grant from The Prudential Foundation.

The support of all of these partners has benefitted students across the country.

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DESIGN ELEMENTS

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LESSONS LEARNED: NFIE'S DROPOUT PREVENTION INITIATIVE

In the four years that have passed since the publication of our first "blueprint" document on dropout prevention, the National Foundation for the Improvement of Education has learned much about the operation of successful dropout prevention programs nationwide. Our foundation has funded 47 programs in 22 states, involving more than 3,500 students and more than 500 teachers and counselors. Through this effort, we have had the opportunity to test the seven principles of dropout prevention outlined in "Operation Rescue: A Blueprint for Success."

Back then, we noted that dropout prevention programs, to be successful, had to reflect a clear vision, had to be staffed by creative and resourceful people, had to be strengthened by a collaboration of interests, and had to be student-centered and classroom-based. Adequate training had to be provided, and all parties involved — including students — had to feel a sense of ownership in the initiative and its outcomes.

That's what we believed when we set out, and that's what we heard when we revisited the programs that took root under our initiative. We asked the educators who run these programs to share with us the wisdom of their experiences in the hopes that others could benefit.

We heard, first and foremost, that teachers need to be given the time, the resources, and the flexibility to create programs that they believe best meet the emotional and intellectual needs of the students they have taken the time to know so well. To set the vision that fuels the effort, program directors said it is important to keep the following points in mind:

- How high students reach depends in great part on how high they believe they can go.
- How effective a dropout prevention program becomes depends on the backing it receives from the broader school community.
- How well students learn, and how motivated they are to want to learn — to test their creativity and to satisfy their curiosity by embracing problems and seeking solutions — is linked to how well they are nurtured at home and in the early years of schooling.
- How effective a school district is in its mission to lower the dropout rate and to educate workers and citizens for a global economy and technologically advanced society is often dependent on how well various segments of the community work together.
- How engaged children are in their schooling and how likely they are to continue learning for a lifetime is strongly influenced by the respect and priority education receives in the home.

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This report takes a closer look at the underlying themes of success — that a program must be teacher-led and student-centered. And then it addresses the five points highlighted above. To "SCORE" a victory with students at risk, project directors say educators need to: Set high, yet reasonable, expectations; Collaborate with community leaders; Offset future problems by intervening early; Recruit school district support; and Enlist and energize parents as partners.

The advice doesn't end there. In this, NFIE's third blueprint document on dropout prevention, project leaders offer guideposts to help educators find effective ways to reach and teach students who otherwise might fall through the cracks.

Yet, a careful review of this book will reveal no single "answer" to the dropout problem. It will, instead, point to the application of a consistent set of strategies, an adherence to a specific set of values, the importance of a sense of mission and purpose, and the significance of keeping the child at the center of the program. With the addition of a teacher leader or a group of teacher leaders, the programs, regardless of their dimensions or shape, work — and children are the beneficiaries.

While there are several landmarks that tell us that our projects have been successful, perhaps the most significant is that over 87 percent of our projects have been continued (either by the school districts in which they have been located, or by the securing of external funding) after NFIE support has been completed.

To conclude, this blueprint is about hope: the hope that time, effort, interest, and respect can help turn around the lives of children who, for reasons often beyond their control, are at risk of dropping out of school and out of life. This blueprint is also a salute to the energies and dedication of a very special group of teachers who have refused to give up on disadvantaged students—those most in need of mentors, and yet the most difficult to reach. The words and experiences of many of these teachers have been highlighted in the quotes and stories "From the Front" that appear throughout these pages.

We at NFIE hope that you will find this book a useful guide for charting the course that best meets the needs of your community and, more importantly, the very valuable resource of human talent that flows through your schoolhouse doors.

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EMPOWER TEACHERS TO DRIVE THE INITIATIVE

When a student is troubled, confused, bored, dismayed, or bewildered, a teacher takes note. The student's schoolwork suffers, his attention is short, his relationships with peers are strained. How effectively a teacher spots these problems and reacts to these manifestations will determine in great part whether a child will succeed in school.

If one accepts the notion that success breeds success, and failure breeds contempt, it is not difficult to see how a teacher is the essential element in any attempt to prevent a student at risk from dropping out of school.

It takes more than sound policies, creative learning materials, and adequate finances to outfit a successful dropout prevention program. It takes heart — a teacher's heart.

A teacher who cares will notice the first symptoms of confusion, despair, and frustration that lay the groundwork for misbehavior, apathy, and detachment. A teacher who cares will see the potential, the talents, and the strengths that are a signature of each child's uniqueness. A teacher who cares will take the time and spend the effort to believe in the student who doesn't believe in himself.

Teachers who care insist that young people acquire adequate life and learning skills to succeed.

To help their students achieve their goals, teachers who care work to secure a broad spectrum of support that encompasses various interests: education, business, family, and community. They collaborate with other teachers to share ideas. And they communicate intent, engage interest, and nurture commitment from community agencies, business and professional organizations, parents groups, senior citizens groups, and civic and charitable organizations.

These teachers get whatever help they can from whomever they can. No stone is left unturned in their determination to provide a forum for students at risk to take risks, deal with emotions, tackle problems, seek solutions, confront conflict, and open up their minds and hearts to learning for a lifetime.

Who are these teachers who take the time to tackle what many people perceive as a thankless, fruitless task, one that is too often destined for failure from the outset? These are teachers who:

- Believe in themselves and their competencies.
- Take risks, trying whatever they think might work with the student at risk, regardless of how likely, and how soon, the payoff will be.
- Take pride in their profession and believe strongly that a good teacher exhibits excitement over, and interest in, all students, including those who exhibit emotional and learning problems.
- Believe that one person can accomplish much by example and by encouraging others to get involved and share effective strategies and insights.

For many students at risk, a chance is all they need: a chance to try to achieve something that experience says is not within their reach, a chance to pick themselves up when they fall short, and a chance to open up to someone who will take the time to listen to them and guide and support them.

To have a positive impact on a community's dropout problem, teachers who take and give chances—who care—need to be empowered to run school-based, needs-driven dropout prevention programs. They need to be encouraged and supported financially, professionally, and politically to give the student at risk the best shot at education.

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TAILOR PROGRAMS TO FIT STUDENT NEEDS

Students most likely to graduate are more likely to have positive self-images. They believe in themselves and feel good about their accomplishments. Ideally, they can cope with stress and make decisions. They can define the problem at hand and select a solution after evaluating various options and their consequences. They are encouraged to set high expectations and to rise to those set for them. They are driven to succeed. Most importantly, they know there is a network of support that allows them to learn from their mistakes and to rise and try again.

In contrast, students at risk of dropping out are more likely to have little faith in themselves. Their low self-concept is often reflected in their attitudes, their dress, and their behavior. In their hunger for identity, they crave attention and are often labeled "discipline problems" because of the means they use to achieve their ends. Their poor life skills, often compounded by financial and/or relationship troubles at home, make it difficult for them to take control of their lives in a positive way. Impulsive behavior mars relationships and leads to isolation. Frequent school absences set the stage for failure, which breeds contempt for school, rather than a challenge to rise and try again. Fearing the future, students at risk live for the here and now, falling prey to more serious problems, such as crime, substance abuse, and teenage pregnancy.

Programs that deal successfully with students at risk begin with the premise that each student, however troubled, has unique talents and strengths that need to be tapped. Success is based on how well the program can identify and meet the emotional and intellectual needs that stand in the way of each student's success.

There are several hallmarks of a successful student-centered program: goals and rules are clearly defined and uniformly enforced; feedback is given regularly and constructively in a nurturing learning environment; and teachers are creative in their efforts to tailor educational styles and techniques to groups of students from diverse backgrounds and with various frames of reference and learning obstacles.

Most importantly, teachers need to set high, yet reasonable, expectations for their students, as well as help them find the means to get there. Respect breeds success by encouraging students to make the effort to tackle a problem, to take the initiative to set a goal, and to persevere until the obstacles in the way are overcome or kept in check.

It helps to keep in mind that students are at the center of many worlds: the world at school, the world at home, the world in the community, the world among their peers, and the world inside their minds. How they function, succeed, fall short, or are respected in one world often affects how well they perform and are perceived in all others.

Too often, though, children at risk wander aimlessly through these worlds, seeking, yet never finding, the positive reinforcement and encouragement they need to achieve in school and in life. A supportive learning environment, one that is student-centered and needs-driven, puts a child at the center of his world at school, giving him or her the greatest chance of success in all other spheres.

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SET HIGH, YET REASONABLE, EXPECTATIONS

How high students reach depends in great part on how high they believe they can reach. All students — the gifted, the nurtured, the troubled and the impoverished — must be given an equal chance to succeed. Yet all too often, conciously or unconsciously, the sights are set lower for youth at risk. Many of these children come from beleaguered families and run-down neighborhoods. With two strikes already against them, the third can be fatal. Apathy can stunt a student's growth in both the academic and social arenas.

Teachers who run dropout prevention programs know this all too well. To offset the negative, they stress the positive by highlighting the possible. Teachers who set high expectations for their students take time to know them, and to understand how life outside the classroom can affect academic initiative and achievement inside the classroom.

These teachers believe in their students. They provide an ample dose of encouragement and positive reinforcement to breed the enthusiasm necessary to instill confidence and diligence. And these teachers enlist the support of others, knowing that getting a child to attend school both physically and mentally is the responsibility of all those who have a stake in the outcomes of public schooling: the family, the school, the workplace, and the community.

"If you can dream it, you can do it."
— Banner on display in Capistrano Elementary School, Ysleta, TX.

SCORE GUIDEPOSTS:

- Provide the structure and guidance necessary to empower students to take the initiative to learn. Foster a sense of responsibility among students for their behaviors and actions in and outside the classroom.
- Maintain a secure and supportive learning environment that encourages students to take risks and reach beyond their immediate grasp.
- Name a task force to suggest ways to protect students. Police, security officers, school officials, and community members can work together to develop strategies to help prevent crime on school grounds and in neighboring communities.
- Create an outlet for students to discuss at the beginning of each week the conflicts they face at home and in school.
- Recognize that different students learn best under different conditions; tailor teaching techniques accordingly. One student might need more structure and function best with a step-by-step outline of the task at hand. Another student might work best with less oversight; a broad overview might be appropriate. Allow active students to move about the classroom and explore various learning stations. Students with greater attention spans might prefer to tackle challenging assignments at their desks.
- Help students set goals individually and as a group. Ask each student to keep a "goals" book. Set aside a bulletin board to chart progress on a class project.
- Focus on critical thinking skills. It matters more how a student reaches an answer than whether the answer itself is right or wrong. Learning how to learn is a vital life skill.
- Use rewards and incentives to accent the positive; in this case, students who meet their own goals and the high expectations set for them. Be careful not to reward less-than-expected behavior. "False" rewards send the wrong signal, sabotaging the satisfaction that comes from reaching one's goals.
- Stress the importance of setting high expectations by holding workshops and in-service training programs that encourage teachers to use positive reinforcements. Discuss the actions, mannerisms, and words that can send negative messages to students.
- Clearly define, outline, and discuss instructional expectations, making sure they are consistent across subject areas and between grade levels. Students need and want to know what is expected of them from year to year and how what they are learning today fits into the long-range plan.

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- Periodically assess what is expected of students, and at what levels. Review such things as test requirements and grade retention standards. Discuss policies that affect the path a student at risk is most likely to travel.
- Set short-term goals. Students, especially those at risk, need to see that they can succeed and that what they are attempting to succeed at serves a useful purpose. Constant reassurance, frequent success, and a clear view of the application of skills and talents learned are strong motivators.
- Understand the mind-set of a student at risk. Telling a student that hard work leads to success might confuse him, especially if he sees his parents work hard, yet struggle to make ends meet.
- Give students "real" work, not just "busy" work. And don't give students work they are not ready for. Doing so can damage a teacher's credibility and destroy the confidence a student has, or may be developing, in his or her academic talents.
- Give each student the opportunity to shine when working in a group. If one student draws well, have him illustrate the story the group has just read. If one student writes well, have her pen the words to match the illustration.
- Showcase achievement. Have students, individually and as a group, demonstrate or explain what they have learned to their peers. Older students can showcase their strengths by serving as tutors or mentors to younger students.
- Ask students to help set school rules and policies that explain not only what is expected of them and why, but what should and will happen as a result of noncompliance. Ask students to write a school constitution or even a student's bill of rights.
- Stress personal responsibility. Set goals, not limits, and make students aware that there are options and choices available to them in their lives.
- Be tough and consistent in requiring that sound rules be met. While educators and parents can encourage and require good attendance, ultimately it is up to each student to decide whether or not to carry out the directive in light of the consequences.
- Keep tabs on student behavior and let them know that what they do does not go unnoticed. If a student breaks the rules, impose the consequences quickly and uniformly.
- Let parents know when they send mixed messages to their children. If a parent allows a child to miss school to go shopping, or to extend a family vacation, the importance of school is undermined.

FROM THE FRONT:
A "CLASSROOM FAMILY"

A third-grade child moved into our school. He was labeled a serious discipline problem because he got into fights, used foul language, and was not liked by his peers. His new teacher set the standards for his behavior right from the beginning. Everyone was to respect those around them. If there were problems, they were to be talked about. They were all there as a classroom "family." And they were all there to learn and to help each other learn. The teacher did not tolerate negative behavior; positive behavior was reinforced.

Right away the teacher gave the new student work that he could accomplish, but something challenging. The student performed well. The work was sent home to show his family his accomplishment.

Over time his behavior improved. He went from a student who was labeled seriously learning-disabled to one who was not at all learning-disabled. The teacher's belief in him challenged him to live up to the expectations she set for him.

The student's experience carried over into his everyday life. He finally got on a bicycle that he was convinced he could not ride because of his low self-concept. And he rode it. He's recently been placed into a gifted-and-talented program.

COLLABORATE WITH COMMUNITY PLAYERS

How effective a school district is in its mission to lower the dropout rate and to educate workers and citizens for a global economy and technologically advanced society is often dependent on how well various segments of the community work together.

Today, when a rising chorus of voices is calling for education reform, it is imperative that educators clearly communicate to non-educators the obstacles faced and solutions proposed, based on both theory and experience. Likewise, educators need to understand the magnitude and the seriousness of the problems faced by business people who are increasingly hard pressed to find workers prepared to meet entry-level challenges and to adapt quickly to the changing workplace needs of a post-industrial, knowledge-based economy.

The goal of collaborative efforts is to step beyond rhetoric and into action and to nurture trust and a high level of interest from at least three groups — educators, business leaders and government officials. Reform is a long-term effort prone to short-term setbacks. The formula for success is to set reasonable, measurable goals based on a shared vision, and to commit resources — both money and manpower — for the long haul.

SCORE GUIDEPOSTS:

- Define goals and strategies before seeking outside support for dropout prevention programs.
- Qualify, don't quantify, your program's aims and objectives. Stress the quality of the program, not merely the number of students served.
- Welcome suggestions from potential supporters. Be flexible enough to modify plans to incorporate sound ideas and to address constructive criticisms.
- Initiate action, but encourage collaboration. Delegate responsibility whenever possible to create ownership in the program and to free time for overseeing and coordinating the effort.
- Gain respect and clout by joining and/or participating in community groups. The decision-makers you might one day face are very often members of these groups, such as the chamber of commerce, governmental advisory boards, private industry councils, and service clubs or organizations.
- Be creative in your efforts to secure corporate support and funding. Ask business leaders to sponsor classes or schools, to donate equipment and manpower resources, and to match fund-raising receipts.
- Invite business and civic leaders to join school officials in designing ways to connect skills learned in the classroom with their applications in the workplace. Encourage community leaders to serve as speakers, mentors, and tutors; schedule "career day" activities; and institute school-to-work transition programs that allow students to gain credit for work done as interns for local firms.

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"How do we combat this killer of aspirations that threatens our nation's future? Together. Schools, teachers, parents, civic organizations, social service agencies, businesses, and government; black, white, native American, Asian, and Hispanic: All of us must come together in the national interest."
— Donna C. Rhodes,
executive director, NFIE.

- Work with health care and social service providers to establish a way to keep students informed about aid available.
- Reach out to the community in as many ways as possible. Host evening socials or concerts. Publish a newsletter to explain your overall mission, communicate your expectations, define your goals, spell out your strategies, and showcase your programs. Do the same in letters to newspaper editors, television and radio station general managers, key legislators, and the governor.
- Name an advisory committee of educators and community representatives to identify and define community needs and to suggest education reform initiatives.
- Meet as often as possible, both formally and informally, with parents, business leaders, and community activists. Hold meetings at school, in business offices, or in the homes of community members. Schedule times that take into account various work schedules, and not just the times school officials are free.
- Set aside a resource area or contact center in the school where community members can meet to tutor students, to discuss ongoing programs, and to propose new initiatives.
- Recognize and celebrate the cultural diversity that makes your community unique. Sponsor multi-cultural activities and community events such as food fairs and music festivals.
- Incorporate community service into the curriculum. Provide the structure for students to work with such groups as the elderly, the sick, the homeless, the poor, or even younger students at risk. Emphasize the benefits to both the doers and the receivers of volunteer services.

FROM THE FRONT:
TAPPING THE RESOURCES

When I was director of a dropout prevention program, we had a little bit of money from the state. A few members got together and asked the superintendent and the principal if we could create an advisory board. We knew there were people out there who could help us make more progress with our at-risk youth. We got the group together — the president of a local bank, the mayor, a member of the city council, and representatives from Health and Human Services and the Recreation Department, among others.

We, the teachers, were all a little nervous. We didn't know what to expect. What came out of our new relationships were things we never expected. Health and Human Services reassigned a child-and-family counselor to our school. She was having trouble keeping up with the kids because they were in school while she was visiting their families at home. The Recreation and Park Services people were able to get some kids into summer programs — for free.

All these people had always wanted to do something to help and they had the resources to do so. They just needed the direction.

"I thought if I could help provide a vehicle that would give kids the basics — good basic skills, good communication skills, proper discipline, and a positive attitude — it would help our community as a whole."
— Barney Costello, president,
state board of education, Anchorage, AK.

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OFFSET FUTURE PROBLEMS BY INTERVENING EARLY

ow well students learn, and how motivated they are to want to learn — to test their creativity and to satisfy their curiosity by embracing problems and seeking solutions — is linked to how well they are nurtured at home and in the early years of schooling. This crucial time sets the stage for lifelong intellectual and emotional development. Yet today, an increasing number of our children come from disadvantaged homes. A majority of our homeless children have yet to enter school.

Students at risk in elementary school, from whatever background and for whatever reason, are destined to fall prey to that risk in high school. Establishing a dropout prevention program in the later years of schooling can have the same affect as applying a Band-Aid to a gaping wound: too little too late. The key is to intervene early, to target those children at risk, and to pair them with teachers motivated and creative enough to strategically guide their charges in the direction of success.

Some of those teachers have told us that early intervention programs are based on faith and perseverance. They believe that their work will one day pay off and they persevere despite the understanding that they may never know if those eager, self-confident children who left their classrooms will, years later, earn their diplomas.

These teachers place stock in the adage that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure; that children who love to learn and believe in themselves are less likely to fail and drop out.

"You may never see the results of your efforts, but that's all right. You never know when a word you say may be recalled, some time years in the future, and cause someone to change his life."
— Bob O'Dell, volunteer, Corsicana, TX.

"Because of our early intervention program, parents felt confident enough to voice their needs and were able to identify their obstacles to achievement. We had two mothers return to school for their GEDs. Another mother became a classroom aide. All three are now off welfare. The money we saved the government on welfare in two years paid for the whole early intervention program. But more than that, it changed the families' lives."
— Eugene, OR.

SCORE GUIDEPOSTS:

- Help children believe in themselves. Institute programs and teaching techniques that build self-esteem by identifying and addressing the emotional needs of children.
- Invest in staff training. It is essential that those who work with children at risk anticipate their needs, understand the obstacles they face, and recognize their signs of progress.
- Ensure the selection of educational materials that meet a program's objectives and are relative to a student population that is culturally diverse.
- Set up activities that require children to respect each other and to communicate effectively with each other. Hold up as examples children who work well together.
- Don't write off students, however burdened or troubled they may be. Set high, yet reasonable, expectations and reward students who meet these goals. Beware not to disillusion students by setting unreachable goals or rewarding work that falls short.
- Work hard to gain a child's trust and confidence. Deal fairly with students across the board and live up to promises made. Be reliable, predictable, and consistent.
- Impress upon students that they must take responsibility for their education. Discuss with them the importance of lifelong learning and the challenges inherent in everyday experiences at home and at work.
- Share with students examples of how people in various work settings have achieved because of their educational accomplishments.
- Incorporate important living skills into your curriculum. Health services have become an invaluable information source, particularly nutrition information, for at-risk children and their parents.

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- Allow for individualized learning activities in reading and math. Tailor such efforts to a child's needs, strengths, and personality. Some children work best with step-by-step guidelines; others work best with as little direction as possible.
- Math and science classes should focus on hands-on activities, and not rely solely, or even predominantly, on textbook readings and workbook exercises.
- Use technology to add to and complement curriculum offerings. Students who learn to use computers early on are more likely to master them in later years.
- Consult and work with parents, offering them guidance on child development matters. Hold individual meetings or host parent discussion groups.
- Meet with parents once a month, if possible, and in their homes, if necessary. Flag trouble areas, but don't forget to give, whenever possible, positive feedback on a child's progress.
- Stress the importance of giving education a top priority in the home, especially to families that seem to accept tardiness and absenteeism in the early grades. Explain that intervening early, as soon as problem behaviors surface, is the best way to ensure a positive attitude toward education in the future.
- Serve a nutritious breakfast in school to students who show up on time. Consider the effort an incentive that works to improve not only attendance, but also attentiveness in class. Approach community businesses for funding.
- Involve not only staff, but community members, parents, and high school students as well in mentor, or "adopt-a-student" programs. Provide space for parents and children to meet to share thoughts and work together on projects. Ask high school students, some of whom could be at risk themselves, to tutor younger students at risk.

"Delay means that by the time remedial help arrives, the window of opportunity is already shut."
— The Ford Foundation

"Our goal is to bond children and their parents to the school by the second grade."
— Nancy Mote English, project director. Eugene, OR.

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RECRUIT SCHOOL DISTRICT SUPPORT

"Over the years, our teachers and the school administration have formed a close relationship. I believe that's because we have the same goal — quality education. Quality education happens when administrators, teachers, and parents listen to each other and work together to educate and care for children."
— Sue Guinn, project director.
Corsicana, TX.

How effective a dropout prevention program becomes depends on the backing it receives from the broader school community. When the program encompasses the best of thoughts from the best of minds, and the vision is shared and the direction is clear, the chances for success are greatly enhanced.

Teachers involved in dropout prevention programs say support needs to come on three fronts. On the school front, teachers need to share ideas, support, and time to better communicate to students, government officials, and the greater community the importance of the task at hand.

On the administrative front, principals need to spearhead the effort, setting both the stage and tone for action. On the policy front, school board members need to back the effort with sound policies and adequate resources, communicating to the community at large the imperative for making dropout prevention a priority agenda item.

SCORE GUIDEPOSTS:

- Work for policies that lay the groundwork for the establishment and continuity of dropout prevention programs.
- Beware of bureaucratic pitfalls. Directives of support from the state or local level should encourage and empower administrators and teachers to take the initiative to design creative programs that address the needs of their particular schools and students.
- Hold up as examples successful programs and encourage their duplication elsewhere. Keep in mind, though, the need to adapt programs to specific needs.
- Foster a shared vision for action by documenting dropout statistics in written reports. Be thorough, methodical, and consistent in approach. Follow up the reports with face-to-face meetings with administrators to propose dropout prevention initiatives.
- En route to documenting the need for dropout prevention, keep notes on the academic and personal issues faced by students at risk. Highlight the strategies used to reach and teach these students and why they were or were not successful.

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- Start a public education campaign to enlist the support of government officials. Focus on the economic and social costs of dropout prevention, giving political leaders the information and expertise they need to advocate the cause.
- Reach out to school board members individually and as a group. Gaining their support can be an essential first step in the effort to sign on administrators as allies.
- Keep in mind the audience you are attempting to reach. Teachers, administrators, school board members, local politicians, and statewide officials have their own frames of reference and agendas. Tailor outreach efforts to their perspectives. Anticipate each audience's questions and concerns so they can be addressed quickly and satisfactorily.
- Be creative in showcasing initiatives. Work with media directors and program participants to produce audio-visual tools that bring to life dropout prevention efforts.
- Keep the vision alive by meeting regularly with administrators in review forums to track progress, identify obstacles, and take corrective actions. Make sure that all participants feel at ease to voice their concerns and suggestions.
- Recognize key players. Give "Friends of the Project" awards to administrators and teachers who lend encouragement and support to a program's success.
- Enlighten teachers by providing in-service workshops that focus on the problems faced by, and the behavioral and academic manifestations exhibited by, students at risk. Discuss how students at risk need structure and are hindered by rules and expectations that are not carefully thought out, clearly communicated, and consistently enforced.
- Work to provide mentors for students at risk. Support scholarship and incentive programs aimed to attract and retain teachers who are role models to a culturally diverse student population.
- Beware of "director overload." Delegate responsibility and duties whenever possible to involve more players.
- Encourage an interdisciplinary approach. An English teacher, for example, can be asked to provide a reading list or outline a course for use in a dropout prevention program.
- Focus on the tone of a school's overall academic environment. Warm and supportive learning atmospheres, coupled with a strong and cohesive curriculum, aids in the effort to prevent students from dropping out.

FROM THE FRONT:
COMMUNICATE THE POTENTIAL

We had one principal go through our teacher-training program for our self-esteem project. Afterwards, she thanked us, saying: "All this time we thought that we were doing fine, but now I can see the potential. I can identify with some of our kids. I feel better about myself, and now I can help kids help themselves."
— Hamilton County, TN.

"Many administrators don't feel like going out on a limb for kids that are marginal, whose parents won't make trouble. You have got to convince administrators to make it their priority."
— Marion Pritchett, project director, Boise, ID.

"The decreasing federal role in education, the poor condition of many state and local economies, and lack of state legislative commitment and leadership to find resources for at-risk programs make new funds for at-risk students difficult to obtain."
— "Children at Risk: The Work of the States."

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ENLIST AND ENERGIZE PARENTS AS PARTNERS

"Parents can make a significant difference in enhancing the education of their children. Even the best of schools and the best of teachers cannot undertake the important task of educating children without parents as allies. Together parents and teachers can form a vital partnership and become an unbeatable team."
— Mary Futrell, former president, National Education Association

How engaged children are in their schooling, and how likely they are to continue learning for a lifetime, is strongly influenced by the respect and priority education receives in the home. Research shows that, regardless of socioeconomic factors, children who come from families that encourage, participate in, and place value on academic endeavors are more likely to achieve.

That's the good news. The bad news is that in too many cities, in too many instances, families are not part of the equation. Many at-risk students come from families that are poor, hurried, broken, distant, or abusive. Or maybe they're just in the dark; willing to spend time to complement and support the efforts of formal schooling, but not quite sure how to go about it.

Educators on the front line say it is essential that the parent-teacher relationship be nurtured. Parents, they say, are a teacher's strongest allies. The encouragement and direction parents give at home enhances the experiences children have in school, aiding in their academic and social development.

Teachers who nurture the home-school connection say it is important not only to communicate to parents the role that they should play, and why, but also to work with parents to show them the role that they can play, and how. To do so, teachers must take the time to understand the dynamics at work in each student's family, keeping in mind that a student's attendance, attention, and achievement are very often affected by the forces of life at home.

SCORE GUIDEPOSTS:

- Begin with the premise that parents want to understand and play an active role in school policies, programs, and initiatives. Then take the initiative to sign on parents as members of the team.
- Enhance the team concept by scheduling one-on-one conferences to foster confidence in classroom activities and respect between parent and teacher. Ask parents what it is they want to know more about, such as standardized testing, and share with them your knowledge, guidance, and support.
- Put parents at ease by scheduling home visits. Some parents open up more readily on more familiar turf.

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- Keep open the lines of communication. Share positive, as well as negative, feedback to parents through phone calls or personal notes.
- Encourage parents to spend time in the schoolhouse so they will feel less awkward in their children's "second home." Provide such things as a "parents' section" in the school library and office or lounge space for parent volunteers.
- Take advantage of parental expertise. Arrange it so that parents can volunteer to share their time, talents, and experiences in the classroom, on field trips, or before schoolwide audiences. Consider the effort as one more way to enrich the lives of students.
- Remember to say "thank you" to parents for their efforts, whether by phone, note, or token gift.
- If parents are not available, reach out to grandparents, foster parents, or volunteer mentors from the community at large.
- Rename "back-to-school night" the "family night" and invite students and parents to come together to discuss what they can anticipate in the new school year and what is to be expected of them.
- Encourage parents to play a role at home and provide for their children such things as a quiet study area, a nutritious breakfast, a time to read together, and guidance and supervision over television viewing habits.
- Host "make-and-take" workshops for parents and teachers to work together to design activities or games that parents and children can enjoy together at home.
- Avoid adversarial conflicts by keeping in check snap judgments. If a child is frequently absent, it may be because of family illness or economic restrictions — and not student initiative or lack of adult care. Question parents in a nonthreatening way about problem behaviors, empathize with them when appropriate, and work together to arrive at a workable solution.
- Provide a forum for parents to seek support, share ideas, or brainstorm solutions to parenting concerns. Publish a newsletter or organize discussion groups.
- Structure a hands-on role for parental supervision. Require parents to sign their children's homework and to sign permission slips for certain activities. The goal is to increase parental involvement in, and awareness of, their childrens' work and experiences in school.

FROM THE FRONT:
FINDING THE ANSWER

One of the boys in the class consistently failed to bring the notebook that he had been asked to get for his classwork. He had been reminded so many times that it was obvious that he was not 'just forgetting' it. After a visit to his home, we saw how his family lived and we understood why he didn't bring the notebook. His family simply couldn't afford the 79 cents it would take to buy it.

"Whether they live in housing projects or in middle-income neighborhoods, parents care how their children are doing in school. They want their children to be well-educated; in many cases because they have suffered from a lack of education themselves."
— Gloria Barragan, project director, Ysleta, TX.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

FIE's success with dropout prevention programs is a reflection of the energy, commitment, and enthusiasm of educators, supporters, and project directors nationwide. NFIE would like to acknowledge:

- Project directors Bob Waters, Carol Tice, Larry Carrico, Marian Pritchett, Joe Bell, Ron Montoya, Sue Guinn, Bev Wolf, Nancy English, Donnis Deever, Marcia Brashears, Joe Aragon, Jim Martin, JoAn Dilweg, Jan Trujillo, Gerry Mackaben, and Gloria Barragan, who contributed greatly to NFIE's third "Blueprint for Success."
- Suha Jhaveri and Melissa Morton, NFIE's 1989 summer interns, who organized and synthesized information from a variety of sources to develop the initial draft of this document; and Don Rollie, who wrote and edited several subsequent drafts.
- Also, to Linda Chion-Kenney, who wrote and edited the final draft; and to Richard J. Kenney, for copyediting services.
- The NEA, for making dropout prevention a top priority.
- The NFIE Board of Directors, for its commitment to at-risk youth and to the programs that give these students a chance to succeed.
- The members of NEA who have contributed their efforts and dollars to make NFIE a national leader in dropout prevention.
- The staff of NFIE, who embrace and guide NFIE's effort to create and support dropout prevention programs. Special thanks to Cheryl Kane, Harry Mitchell, Kim Beury, James Wilson, Nettie Legters, Brendon McLoskey, Karilyn Smith, Gwen Leak, and Tommie Person.
- The consultants who monitor projects and provide technical assistance, John Cox and Don Rollie.
- NEA Communications, for its work in highlighting the work of NFIE dropout prevention programs in a variety of media, especially Elvira Crocker and Mabel Barker.

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NFIE DROPOUT PREVENTION PROGRAMS

FIE grants have given teachers nationwide the opportunity to implement their ideas, enabling them to serve as front-runners in the drive for a restructured education system that meets the needs of all students — including those at risk of dropping out of school.

In a survey of 50 NFIE-funded projects, involving some 120 schools, project leaders reported that their programs led to a significant improvement in test scores (41 percent), a positive improvement in grades (54 percent), improved attendance (74 percent), and improved behavior (80 percent).

In addition, project directors said students involved in their programs would not have otherwise received the support necessary to help improve their self-esteem (72 percent), individualized tutoring (60 percent), and an increased amount of much-needed teacher attention (83 percent). The NFIE Dropout Prevention Survey also found that the programs helped stimulate increased parental awareness of the dropout problem and more widespread interest in their children's education in general (83 percent).

Information for this book reflects the experiences of teachers involved in the 47 projects in 22 states that have been funded by NFIE through its Dropout Prevention Program. These project leaders have met for seminars and workshops, sharing their ideas and forming their strategies by reviewing program successes and pitfalls. These leaders, and their programs, serve as vital resources for educators nationwide who seek ways to lessen the risk for students at risk of dropping out of school.

The NFIE projects, their directors, and key aims and/or strategies are listed below.

Anchorage Open Door Project
Anchorage, AK
Bob Waters, project director
- Aims to keep Alaskan children in school.

Teaching-Learning Communities (TLC)
Ann Arbor, MI
Carol Tice, project director
- Uses senior citizens as mentors.

Operation Rescue, Bardstown
Bardstown, KY
Larry Carrico, project director
- Combines community collaboration, tutoring, counseling.

Teen Parents Transition Program: Take Charge of Your Life
Boise, ID
Marian Pritchett, project director
- Allows young mothers to finish school.

Project KIS (Keep Kids in School)
Buncombe County, NC
Paula Egelson, project director
- Targets 20 academically at risk students in grades seven and eight.

Hooking Kids on School
Cambridge, MA
Marie Orban, project director
- Builds a districtwide Teacher Dropout Prevention Network.

Self-Esteem and Motivation for Urban Special Ed Students
Camden, NJ
Francine Stavisky and Maria Cortes, project directors
- A mediation and problem-solving program, with parents.

Growing Emotionally Through Self-Esteem Training (GET SET)
Chatham County, GA
Joe Bell, project director
- A self-esteem program for elementary school students.

Hang in There (HIT)
Las Vegas, NV
Ron Montoya, project director
- Tutorial and remedial program for Hispanic youth.

Operation Rescue, Clayton
Clayton, NM
Judy Valdez, project director
- Small-group tutoring augmented by recreational activity.

Operation Rescue, Corsicana
Corsicana, TX
Sue Guinn, project director
- Volunteers "adopt" 100 at risk students in pre-kindergarten through grade seven.

Wake All Kids to Excellence (WAKE)
Denver, CO
Carrie B. Woods, project director
- High school students tutor students in kindergarten through grade two.

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Nutritious Breakfast Program
Derby, KS
Beverlann Wolf, project director
- Serves nutritious snacks and teaches nutrition to students in kindergarten through grade six.

The Learning Center
East Ramapo, NY
Mary Mahlstedt, project director
- Total language based program for at risk students in grade one.

Early Intervention for At-Risk Children
Eugene, OR
Nancy Mote English, project director
- Bonds to school parents and their children in kindergarten through grade two.

Life Skills Motivational Program
Fremont, CA
Gail Myers, project director
- Reinforces life skills to learning disabled high school students.

Operation Rescue, Gainesville
Gainesville, GA
James Sargent, project director
- Organizes a broad coalition to address dropout problems.

Operation Rescue, Glendale
Glendale, AZ
Mary Kay Hoffman and Donnis Deeser, project directors
- Daily enrichment seminars and learning labs for at risk students.

Math: A Subject for Life
Gloucester City, NJ
Geraldine Trabant, project director
- Math lab aims to improve skills, involves parents.

Operation Rescue, Greencastle
Greencastle, PA
Linda Wolfe, project director
- Addresses students with chronic absences.

F.O.R.E.V.E.R.
Hamilton County, TN
Marcia Brashears, project director
- Districtwide self-esteem program for elementary school students.

Partners for Early Progress
Jersey City, NJ
Gail Hall, project director
- Transitional class for students about to enter first grade; with parents.

The Small Business Academy
Bakersfield, CA
Arlene Kindel, project director
- Practical business skills and academics mixed for high school students.

Operation Rescue, LaCrosse
LaCrosse, WI
Mike Schnitzius, project director
- Volunteers tutor, counsel at-risk students in grades four and five.

On-Site Daycare Center
Memphis, TN
Wayne Pike, project director
- Provide child-care services to students who are parents.

Project Rebound
Metcalfe County, KY
Benny Lile, project director
- Summer program in basic skills for students who have failed.

Operation Rescue Capacity Building, Gadsen
Gadsen, NM
Paul Morales, project director
- Aims to ensure students graduate from high school.

Operation Rescue, Los Lunas
Los Lunas, NM
Joe Aragon, project director
- An all-district, all-level program with control group.

Preventing and Recapturing Student Dropouts
St. Louis, MO
Ted Tunnison, project director
- Main components: community awareness, peer tutoring.

Gables Productions: Videotaped Theatrical Encounters
Neptune, NJ
Lucille Alfano, project director
- Students write, produce videotapes to aid problem-solving skills.

Success Through Employment
Newark, NJ
Zella R. Pollack, project director
- Teaches employment skills to special education high school students.

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Partners in Learning Skills (PALS)
Paterson, NJ
Joseph Verilla, project director
- Students in grades seven and eight tutor students in kindergarten through grade four.

Operation Rescue, Pinellas County
Pinellas County, FL
James Martin, project director
- Helps parents and students ages 11 through 15 develop life skills.

Help Us Grow (HUG)
Pitt County, NC
Sandra Flowers, project director
- After-school tutorial program for at risk students in kindergarten.

At-Risk Enrichment Agenda (AREA)
Pocatello, ID
JoAn Dilweg, project director
- A re-entry program for students who have dropped out of high school.

The Mentor Program
Roselle, NJ
Regina Edwards, project director
- Targets 35 disaffected high school students; includes counseling.

Operation Rescue, San Antonio
San Antonio, TX
Jan Trujillo, project director
- "Literacy Leadership" summer program for high school students.

I Can Grow
Reading, CA
Jessie Underwood, project director
- Vocational training, job experience and placement for high school students.

Intervention for At-Risk Students: Focus on Career Awareness
Cottage Grove, OR
JoAnne Allman, project director
- Career awareness program for at-risk elementary school students.

Project Incentive: Changing Attitudes Towards School
Springfield, MA
Marguerite Egan, project director
- Elementary school program uses incentives to reward success.

Project ENABLE
Tucson, AZ
Geraldine Mackaben and Karen Chatterton, project directors
- Interdisciplinary program for Native American students.

Partners in Learning
Irvington, NJ
Jeanne Ferrucci, project director
- Encourages parents to become involved in homework.

Save Our Schools
Los Angeles, CA
Richard Rodriguez, project director
- After-school tutoring for Hispanic students at a city junior high school.

Positive People Program
Willingboro, NJ
Evelyn Carson, project director
- Collaborative effort to reduce teen pregnancies.

Parents Involvement for Children's Kindergarten Success
Woodbridge, NJ
Mary Paris, project director
- Parents assist in developing children's readiness skills.

Operation Rescue, Woodland
Woodland, CA
Sandi Redenback, project director
- High level of community support in migrant work area.

Project CARE
Ysleta, TX
Gloria Barragan, project director
- Mentors, parent involvement, home visits in Hispanic area.

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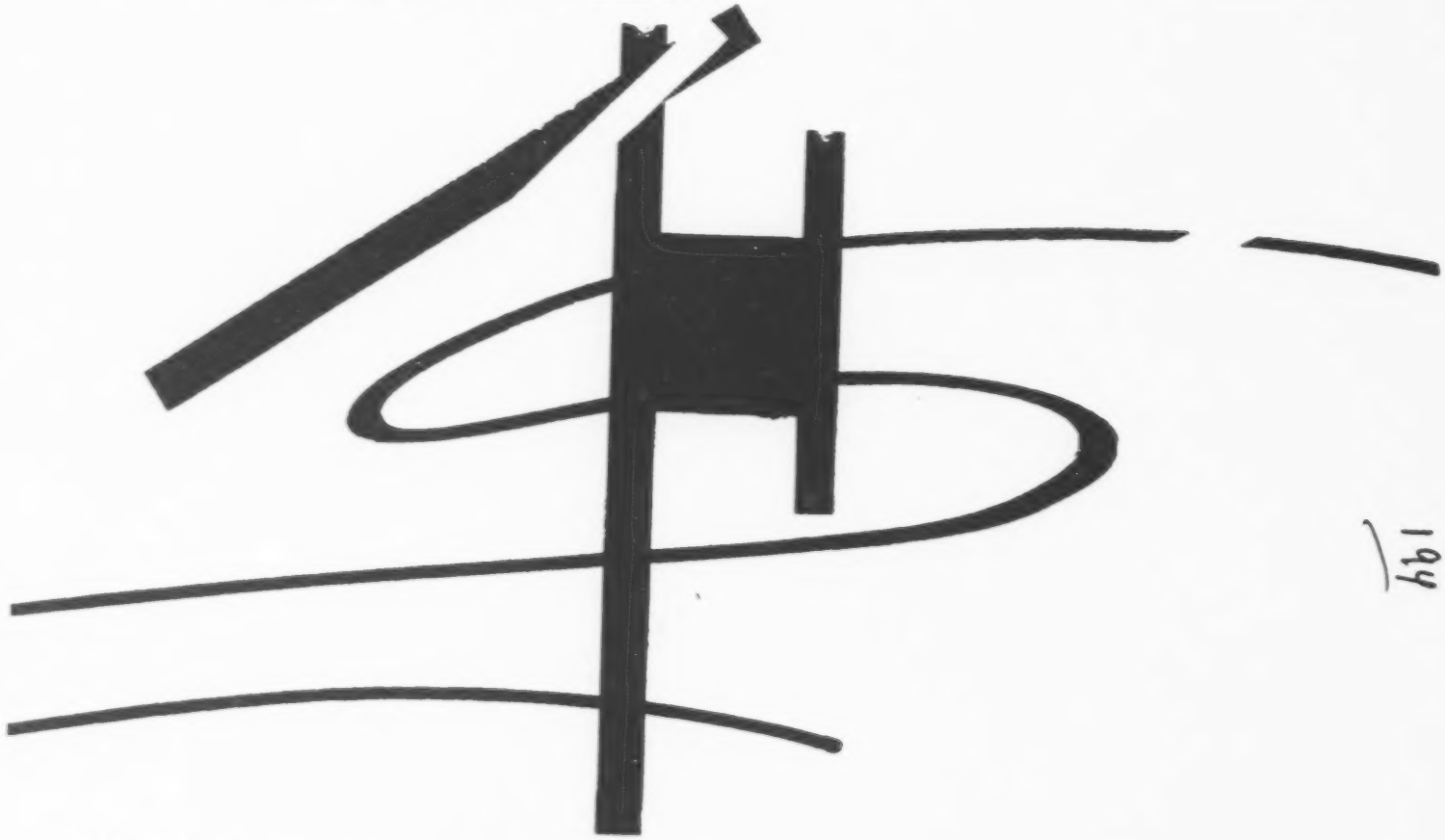
A BLUEPRINT FOR SUCCESS



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APPENDIX S – SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD, STATEMENT OF SARRA BETH CHERRY, MENAUL HIGH SCHOOL, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Sarra Beth Cherry
4715 Sandpoint N/W
Albuquerque, N.M.
87114

Drop Out Rate Prevention

Keep Connected! Involvement in school and extracurricular activities would decrease the drop out rate. Young people have a great need to feel connected. By being involved with the school community, the school and the student will be connected.

Sarra Beth Cherry
Menaul High School

(199)

APPENDIX T – SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD, STATEMENT OF KAREN KATHLEEN ROARK, ALBUQUERQUE HIGH SCHOOL, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

To: The House of Representatives Committee on Education
From: Karen Kathleen Roark
911 Jefferson NE
Albuquerque, NM 87110
Albuquerque High School junior
Re: Drop Out Prevention hearing -- January 24, 2000

Adolescence, not unlike adulthood, is a collection of challenge after challenge waiting to be conquered. The most important challenge for teenagers today is high school. *To graduate or not to graduate, that is the question*. Before we can scrutinize the drop out rates of our high schools, we must first understand where the answers to that question are coming from. If a student chooses to graduate, what are her reasons? She wants to go to college, wants a high paying job, wants to change the world. If a student opts to drop out of high school, once again, what are her reasons? Perhaps she is pregnant, perhaps she has a problem with drugs, perhaps she thought school was a "waste of her time." She would still like to change the world. The road of adolescence is a crooked one, crooked and on rocky soil. For some the obstacles that fall in their path are simply harder to overcome. The dreams and visions are still there, but the question is no longer simply to graduate or not to graduate.

I am not here to make excuses for those who have left high school. I cannot justify the high drop out rate at my school, but it is there, and I know it is there for a reason. Before we can say "***how*** do we fix this," we must ask "***what*** is the problem?" When we understand what the problem is, we can focus on it, and make a difference together. More likely than not, the reasons for the drop out rates at each school will be different. However, there is a formula to solve every equation so long as you know what the problem is.

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APPENDIX U – SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD, STATEMENT OF MICHAEL R. SUTTLE, SR., CAPTAIN, USMC, RETIRED, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

TO: CONGRESSIONAL HEARING ON EDUCATION
ALBUQUERQUE, NM

SUBJ: STUDENT RETENTION IN SCHOOLS

DATE : January 23, 2000

Thankyou for this opportunity to provide experienced insight imto the subject issue. This will be brief.

My background includes several years running and Teaching Loma Linda Alernative School here in Albuquerque in conjunction primarily with Highland High School. I gained students from the street, transfers, released from jail, and high risk behavior problems. The program was very successful, with most of the students returning to regular school within 3-6 months and being motivated to do so.

In addition, I have worked very recently for the state of New Mexico in the Youth Diagnostic and Development Center -- most recently as a teacher in the highest risk incarceration facility for adjudicated delinquents in the state. Following are key observations I have made of these students and the educational system:

1.) SOCIAL PROMOTION SHOULD BE ELIMINATED: Too many students reach high school with out the academic knowledge or study skills needed to keep up -- standards for each grade level should be established, and students held back or given special help -- often social services may need to intervene in home life, but mostly the "boot technique" (kick them in the..) works well.

2.) GOALS SETTING SKILLS: My experience is that if you ask a student to list 50 "things" they want to do in life -- not careers necessarily, just anything (scuba dive, run a 1/4 mile, etc.) the students who are struling or most at risk will have the most difficulty,. some times unable to list more than 2-3 -- their vision is short sighted and survivalist in nature - perhaps for good reason -- but needs to be "elongated" so to speak -- short term behaviors tend to lean toward longer term goals --

3.) REWARD ACHIEVEMRNT NOT SEAT TIME: Many of these students are quite bright, although lacking academically often from not attending school for a variety of reasons, not always within their control. By using achievement based criteria instead of seat time many of these students , once goal directed, can accomplish an

amazing amount of work in a relatively short period of time -- "cut to the bone" in other words and orient learning to what they want to do -- " goals".

There is more, of course. It should be noted that I met with 90%+ of parents of students at my alternative school, at least one of them. That way we all know and agree on expectations, and is very beneficial. Also, schools should have an almost full time staff person accounting for and tracking down students who should be in school. The problem is either motivational in nature, or physically restraining, such as the need to take care of siblings, etc.. Either citations should be issued and enforced (boot technique) or social services should be brought to bear – but absence from school should not be tolerated. Simply enforcing the existing laws would be a good start.

Again, thankyou for reading my input. Please feel free to reach me as given below if I can be of any assistance whatsoever.

Submitted Respectfully,

Michael R. Suttle, Sr.
Captain, USMC, Ret.

3008-10th St. NW
Albuquerque, NM 87107

(505)345-5159

APPENDIX V – SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD, STATEMENT OF KIUTUS TECUMSEH, PRESIDENT, NEW MEXICO INDIAN EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO, WITH THREE (3) ATTACHMENTS

Ki Tecumseh
2704 Valencia Drive NE
Albuquerque, NM 87110
Phone: 505-889-3249

January 24, 2000

To: **House Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations**

From: Ti Tecumseh

American Indian students within the Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) are dropping out at an alarming rate.

In 1989-90 the APS American Indian dropout rate was 14% and recent statistics show the rate is now 20%. The current rate is the highest of any student population within APS.

APS Indian students could well be likened to an Aldous Huxley quote which reads: "I am ignorant and impotent and yet, somehow or other, here I am, unhappy, no doubt, profoundly dissatisfied..in spite of everything I survive.

At a recent APS Educational Equity Committee meeting Dr. Brad Allison, APS Superintendent, stated: "You Indian parents have failed your children." This issue is of great concern to Indian parents and other concerned citizens of Albuquerque.

There are 5000 urban Indian students enrolled in APS who are members of 130 tribes including the 22 indigenous tribes in New Mexico. The federal government has provided educational funds to APS for the special needs of Indian students for well over 20 years. A good question is - has this money been used to benefit these students? Indian parents want to know, as do other taxpayers who have long recognized these Indian students "At risk students" as a means of obtaining additional federal and state funding.

Recently the APS Indian Parent Committee has voiced concerns about Indian Student problems in the areas of:

- High dropout rates
- Low academic achievement on standardized tests
- Over-representation in special education
- a sharp decline in services and FTEs that are targeted to work with Indian students
- APS administration being insensitive to resolving pressing concerns of Indian parents and community members

Attached for you information are copies of:

(A) City of Albuquerque Commission on Indian Affairs Resolution dated 6/7/99 on Restructuring of Indian Education Program

(B) Report of the Subcommittee on Indian Education to the APS Superintendent's Community Council on Equity dated 8/19/99

© New Mexico Indian Education Advisory Council Resolution No. 1-01-2000 (Requesting APS to rectify existing problems and services for Native American Students)

Thank you for your concern for our American Indian Children.

Albuquerque Public Schools
Superintendent's Community Council on Equity

Memorandum **Date:** August 24, 1999

To: Dr. Brad Allison, Superintendent
Albuquerque Public Schools (APS)

From: Arturo Talamante, Chairman
Superintendent's Community Council on Equity (SCCE)

Subject: APS Indian Education

Enclosed is the SCCE's Subcommittee on Indian Education's report on the APS Indian Education Unit. As you recall, the SCCE referred this matter over to the Subcommittee at its July 15, 1999 meeting.

The report was presented at the August 19, 1999 meeting of the SCCE and unanimously approved by the membership.

We look forward to continuing to work with you on this matter and to receiving, at our next meeting in September, 1999, a favorable response to the request for an independent evaluation of APS Indian education.

Report of the Subcommittee on Indian Education
to the APS Superintendent's Community Council on Equity

Recommendation 1: The Albuquerque Public Schools contract the services of an independent evaluator to conduct a complete evaluation of Indian education in the Albuquerque Public Schools. The evaluation must include consideration of the following:

- Administrative and programmatic function of the present Indian Education Unit, including its function, purpose, and operation.
- To determine whether the Albuquerque Public Schools Indian education program is meeting present expectations and needs of the Indian community.
- To determine whether current federal guidelines of the Indian Education Unit support all of the educational needs of Indian students at the Albuquerque Public Schools.
- To determine whether the state, federal, and local funds received or allocated to the Indian Education Unit is sufficient to meet the needs of the Indian students.
- To determine whether the overall needs of or for Indian education could better be served from a expanded, all inclusive, Office of Indian Education.

In addition, the following be considered in the evaluation process:

A. In undertaking the evaluation, the Albuquerque Public Schools must be cognizant of the unique relationship between federal and State governments and the Indian people that enables programs such as the Indian Education Unit to function in systems such as the Albuquerque Public Schools.

B. The evaluator must have demonstrated experience in conducting evaluations of Indian education, in general, and Indian education programs, in particular.

C. The evaluator should have a demonstrated awareness and sensitivity of the needs and desires of the Indian people.

D. While we recognize that the currently planned equity study by the Albuquerque Public Schools is designed to address some of the questions posed above, we submit that the unique relationship that established the Indian Education Unit warrants this evaluation.

E. The above statement by no means suggests that the Indian students should be excluded from the overall equity study.

Recommendation 2: Until the requested evaluation of the Indian Education Unit, in particular, and Indian education at the Albuquerque Public Schools, in general, is completed, considered, and acted upon, the Albuquerque Public Schools Superintendent's decision of July 15, 1999 not to place the Indian Education Unit under the Cross Cultural Office remain in effect.

Submitted August 19, 1999

Emmett Francis, Chairperson

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ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

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725 UNIVERSITY BLVD., S.E.
P.O. Box 25704
87125-0704

30 PM 1:23

March 26, 1999

Mr. Barni Botone
Chairman for Commission on Indian Affairs
City of Albuquerque
PO Box 1293
Albuquerque, NM 87103

Dear Mr. Botone,

I am in receipt of your memo dated March 5, 1999. As I read through the information, it seemed as though your primary concern was that Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) become aware of and address issues regarding Indian education.

As you know, our district has recently hired a director for Indian education who possesses the background and the desire to work with the Indian students of our city. The Board of Education is committed to this effort as well.

I am pleased that your discussions with Dr. Allison were beneficial. As he addresses the needs of all students within our district, I am confident that no single group will receive less attention than any other. The Board is committed to support the Superintendent in these efforts. His tenure will be directly related to his performance and personal decisions.

Thank you for your correspondence.

Sincerely,

Richard Toledo

Richard Toledo, President
Board of Education

RT/vm

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NEW MEXICO INDIAN EDUCATION ADVISORY COUNCIL
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

Resolution No. 1-01-2000

RESOLUTION OF REQUEST TO ALBUQUERQUE PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT (APS) TO RECTIFY EXISTING PROBLEMS, RE-ESTABLISH AND STABILIZE THE INDIAN EDUCATION PROGRAM AND SERVICES FOR NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENTS

WHEREAS:

1. The NMIEAC recognizes the APS Indian Parent Committee as the official voice and advocate for the Indian parents and its 5,000 urban Indian student population served by the APS school district who are members of over 130 tribes including the 22 indigenous tribes in New Mexico; and

2. The APS Indian Parent Committee formally presented pressing issues and concerns regarding organizational structure, programmatic, operational, administrative, personnel and budgetary instability affecting the efficient and effective services to the Native American population; and

3. The APS accountability reports and other data indicate the long standing problems of the Native American population such as high drop out, low academic achievement on standardized tests and over representation in special education, Title I and bilingual programs which require systematic and strategic plans for improvement; and

4. The APS Indian education programs within the past three years indicate a sharp decline in services and FTE that are targeted to work with Native American students despite the growing needs; and

5. The APS Indian education programs within the past three years has experienced a high administrative and staff turnover as well as vacancies being on hold which were funded by the school district in the past thus contributing to its instability; and

6. The APS administration directly responsible for the oversight of the Indian Education Program has failed to rectify the long standing problems to serve the best interest of the Native American parents and students; and

7. The APS school district has the opportunity to provide its proper leadership and responsibility to investigate, assess, and institute a corrective action plan that will involve the full participation of the APS Indian Parent committee; and

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8. The failure to adequately resolve the pressing concerns and issues by the school district will indicate to the APS Indian Parent Committee to take further action outside the district to seek redress.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The NMIEAC requests Albuquerque Public School District (APS) to rectify existing problems, re-establish and stabilize the Indian Education Program and services for Native American student population; and

2. The NMIEAC requests APS to involve the improvement APS Indian Parent Committee in formulating the development of a corrective action and plan that will reverse the high drop out and low academic achievement by Native American students; and

3. The NMIEAC requests APS to re-establish program services and increase FTE to equitably serve all Native American students who demonstrate a need for services; and

4. The NMIEAC request APS to disseminate its corrective action plan to all the 22 Indian tribes and their tribal departments, the NM Indian legislators, the NM congressional offices, the NMIECE, the SBE, the NMSDE Superintendent, the NMSDE Indian Education Unit, the Mayor's Office and APS Indian Parents.

CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned members of the New Mexico Indian Education Advisory Council, hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly adopted at an official meeting held in Santa Fe, New Mexico by a vote of 6 in favor, 0 opposed , and 0 abstaining, this 10th day of January, 2000.

Kiutus Tecumseh

Kiutus Tecumseh, President
New Mexico Indian Education Advisory Council

APPENDIX W – SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD, STATEMENT OF BARNIE J. BOTONE, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

Barnie J. Botone
445 Sierra Drive SE
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87108
January 24, 2000

Testimony Presented to the House of Representatives
Subcommittee on Oversight & Investigations
Committee on Education & The Workforce
"Dropout Prevention"

Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony for your perusal. I will briefly state my official positions on boards & commissions. I am the Chairman of the Commission on Indian Affairs for the City of Albuquerque; Member of the Blackfeet Nation; and Organized Labor Member of the State of New Mexico Industrial Development Training Board.

I may be among the fortunate and privileged Native American parents in the City of Albuquerque who have been afforded an opportunity to view education of the City's youth from four distinctly different vantage points. First as a student and secondly as a parent & grandparent of three children, and presently one grandchild who have attended or attends the Albuquerque Public School (APS) system. The third as a totally committed advocate of improved Indian Education; and finally – a daily witness to devastating results of failure to properly prepare students to meet the challenges of the future.

I can't help recalling a study completed in the late 1960's entitled "The underachievement Syndrome of the Native American." The study suggested Indian children learn faster and retain more knowledge than any other children in the USA do – until they become aware for the first time in their lives they are Native American Indians. This usually occurs in their second or third year of formal schooling. They quickly identify with an image of the Native American created by historians, educators, writers, actors, etc., that suggests we are nothing more than savages bent on eradication of white settlers and soldiers who were trying to settle the frontiers of this nation. There is hardly a mention in our history books of treaty violations that led to skirmishes between Indians and whites. This historical blunder is reinforced constantly and continuously in modern media.

In recent weeks I learned from reliable sources that in 1992 dropouts were 14% and currently 20% of Indian students are dropping out, or expelled from APS and the number is 50% across the nation. It appears we have not learned from the mistakes of history, and therefore we are being forced to repeat them. I am not here to place blame – there's enough to ensure a generous helping to anyone and everyone involved in education of Native American youth, including parents. Nor am I here to force indictment of the system. To be certain I am here to promote what I feel is a holistic approach to education, and the workforce, and it is not a short-term solution. Neither does it allow for cosmetic treatment of glaring problems in the system, but radical surgery to correct historical wrongs that continue to plague the Indian community and others who struggle with the same. In any case, I would like to express my views on a few of the issues requiring immediate attention.

Current & future Problems: As we face a global economy with the lightning speed of digital information with the extreme forces and stresses and the neglect of public life take their toll on our children, it appears as disastrous consequences. The many challenges that face public schools are shrinking budgets, gang activity, high dropout rates, mobility rates exceeding 80% in some schools, parent alienation, and falling public support for public education. Family stresses of wages with greater demand for second jobs in order to make ends meet coupled with other factors reduce the free time to spend with their children, be active in schools, and activities outside the home which build communities. Lack of good paying jobs and the need for a living wage leaves our youth unprepared for the ever-changing economy of the future. This widens the already growing wage gap between the skilled and the unskilled. The ranking of NM which pertains to national economic and social indicators. Unemployment rates for Indians are 12% in the city, and 50 to 75% in and around the Indian reservations of the state. The widening of the gap for the have and have-nots of digital technology. Race discrimination and segregation in schools, and in the workplace.

In the case of the Native American Indian – THE FACT IS: Our children have the poorest academic and the highest drop out rates of all other races in the American educational system. Literacy levels are between 0 and 6th grade among tribal people. Many children exhibit learning deficits, behavior and emotional problems, as well as physical disabilities. They grow up to be adults with those same problems. The problems do not go away with time or age.

What has worked in the Past: In short, we no longer consider the cost of education an investment in our country's future, in spite of the historical fact of massive investment in education accounts for our present strong position in the world. I find it difficult to understand why those making decisions about the education fail to recall the GI Bill following WWII, when the United States invested in the education of an entire generation. It was the same homeless, unemployed, structurally unemployable and generally disenfranchised individuals who walked the streets of our cities. Who occupied shantytowns throughout the country, worked for little or nothing when afforded the opportunity to work prior to WWII that carried the nation during wartime. A grateful nation responded by investing in their education, and it was that generation that took this country to the highest levels in all fields of new technologies, finance, agricultural and numerous other disciplines. Now, it appears those who benefited the most from the legacy literally handed us by WWII generation have short memory spans. So short in fact they fail to recall the investment in education of their parents by this nation that enabled most to begin their lives insulated against poverty and the other social ills of society. It's very unfortunate the children of the most productive generation in our history have settled for complacency and indifference to education, or investment in the human resource of this nation.

Solutions: Amherst College president Merrill Gates said " We must make the Indian more intelligently selfish before we can make him unselfishly intelligent. We need to awaken in him wants." The diversity of learning is obvious in the approach of educating Native peoples. They are taught in contextual modalities. As Indian people we have taught our children to use their senses and to meet today's demands and survival strategies. I think most of us feel education is limited to a text-oriented environment and ends when a diploma is issued as proof positive the recipient is prepared to meet the challenges of today's demanding world. That, defiantly is not the case. I grew up with an understanding that less than 10 % of the knowledge we acquire in our lives is acquired in a text-oriented environment; the balance

from experiences in our daily lives. I was also taught it is virtually impossible to meet another person who does not enhance another person's knowledge base, provided an open mind can be maintained about learning. It now appears we no longer accept the fact our entire lives is series of educational learning experiences. Therefore, I present the following for consideration:

- Cultural diversity learning brings different learning strategies. Teaching bilingual education with regard to English as a second language. Additionally, teach diversity training with cultural relevance. Hire and train Native American peoples, as well as mandatory cultural diversity training for all teachers. Benchmark what the students know, as well as what they can do. Match teachers with performance based outcomes.
- Basic math, sciences, and literacy skills. There is a high positive correlation between low literacy and criminality: 68% of those arrested are illiterate, 60% of American prison inmates are illiterate. 85% of unwed mothers are illiterate. Three fourths of the Fortune 500 firms provide some level of remedial training for their workers at an estimated cost of $300 million per year. Peer-mentor tutoring through "study technology" training has provided positive outcomes to the Trumbull Park students in Albuquerque. Mid-school & elementary students administer the program. It is an after school program with little or no funding. Computer assisted learning also located at Caesar Chavez Community Center is an out come based program. Many succeed because of the one on one with immediate reinforcement for successful accomplished work. The busy work that has bored many of our students is a factor. However, digital technology has provided the performance base for completing high school where in many cases the graduates would have been dropout statistics.
- Early digital, and high technology training. The future in NM is the high technology industry. As a member of the Industrial Development Training Board for the State of NM I know through countless testimonies of management expressing their nightmares in recruiting qualified personnel from the NM that we have not provided quality education to address this growing need. Technology is the primary need for today's work force.
- Classes for all to teach entrepreneurs, business, and financial management. All these are core standards to apply early for performance based futures.
- Employability or the lack therein lies an enormous problem. However, education of students to become job ready and job seeking skills with all the attributes to the aforementioned taught to secure gainful employment.
- Cooperative thinking through partnerships with family, pupil, teacher, and community. Prepare teachers for the future in order to teach pupils what they will need to know as opposed to subjects that do not have any benefit for future life experiences.
- Post secondary level education is leaving many native students behind because many are dropping out in the firs two years. In fact this group is the highest rate at this level. Many of the reasons are financial factors. Cultural vs. Competition. I suggest distance learning capability to every village, community and reservation for the semi-protection provided at home locations. The learning environment closer to home is always a more economical and beneficial method.
- Mandatory leadership training for the vision and performance of the future.
- Provide extra curricular activities for **all** students not just those with strong athletic or academic interests. After school learning circles, cultural clubs, automobile clubs, exercise and body building clubs, and etc., available to enhance necessary future skills.

Vision: To effectively act on the kinds of challenges described above and to fund projects that are worthy because of productivity vs. activity. We must look to the future for the teachers who will bravely accept the challenge and through cooperative synergy make the future brighter. We must develop a vision of how our schools and communities could be and that vision should have the following components.

- Every child is capable of learning. There is an Apache saying that when you are ready to learn a teacher will appear.
- Schools must be communities of learners in which all stakeholders are involved in developing the future.
- Learning needs to take place in safe and secure environments
- Local school districts need to be more accountable for resources and learning.
- Graduates need to possess strong basic academic and technological skills, but they also need to master skills which allow them to be creative problem solvers, work in collaboration with others, and be prepared to be active citizens.

Please investigate and advise.

Sincerely,

Barnie J. Botone

Cc: file

APPENDIX X – SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD, PRESENTATION OF 1/24/00, TO CHAIRMAN PETE HOEKSTRA, BY MEMBERS OF THE ALBUQUERQUE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO

January 26, 2000

Chairman Hoekstra

Dear Chairman,

Attached is a copy for the record of the presentation given by members of the Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce for members of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, Committee on Education and the Workforce. The presentation was given, January 24, 2000.

Thank you.

(227)

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Terri:
Introduction: Thank you/I am Terri Cole
We intend to brief you on what we are doing, why we are doing it and what we have learned to date.

Members of our group who are present include:
Rick Alvidrez, with Keleher and McLeod Law Firm, and Chair-Elect of the GACC
Mike DeWitte from Sandia National Labs representing Economic Forum
Maria Raby-Mondragon, with Contract Associates representing both ACI and the GACC
Norm Becker, Blue Cross/Blue Shield with the Chamber
Karl Johnson, Attorney representing ACI
Jon Barela, Intel representing AHCC
Gary Dushane, KPMG representing GACC
Larry Willard, Wells Fargo Bank representing AED and GACC
Mike Stanford, First State Bank representing GACC
Vince Garcia, Factor Plus, GACC
Howard Mock, Jaynes Corp., GACC
Tony Strati, KPMG representing GACC

Slide 2
First- 33,000 feet level

- No nation can succeed in providing full employment at high wages if it fails to educate and train all of its citizens to high standards.
  Well-paying, high performance jobs are increasingly demanding high skills, particularly technical ones.
- We must set clear standards to ensure that everyone has the necessary academic and technical knowledge and skills to succeed in the new economy or we will be impeding the growth of business productivity and the quality of life for all.
- This is true not only for nations, but for states and regions as well, as we are increasingly competing on a global basis.

- Representing business organizations we are concerned with the economic vitality of our community and the success of the businesses here.

Slide 3 Goals

- For the past several years, the Chamber has been working with educators, administrators, and business organizations throughout the region to find solutions to problems in our education system.

- We have come to an understanding that if significant change is to happen, it will not happen by just adding another program. Instead, we must have a unified focus and clear goals to guide us.

- Quality education is an essential ingredient to our economic development and vitality and directly affects our quality of life.

Slide 4 Issues

- This is particularly important since our public schools provide educational opportunities for a very culturally and economically diverse population.

- In Albuquerque, 17% of children ages 5 to 17 live below the poverty level. Currently, more than 2500 students drop out of APS High schools each year.

- These startling numbers have a domino effect when students enter into higher education.
- At TV-I and UNM, professors are faced with the task of remediation.
- At TV-I alone, 30% of all students are in remedial classes, while 60% of freshmen take remedial classes.
- At UNM, 30% of freshmen drop out.

Slide 5

But the domino effect does not stop there. It continues to spill over into the business sector. Employers are faced with the daunting task of continual work force training. As employers put more and more resources into training employees, they are faced with not only budgetary issues, but also time on the job lost to training.

Slide 6

Business Survey: Anticipated Hiring/Reduction of Workforce

- While the immediate future of Albuquerque area businesses appears to be bright as three in five owners executives say they will be expanding their workforce in the next year, while just 1% have plans to reduce their workforce.
- Despite these plans for expansion, there are important issues that continue to greatly concern many local business owners/executives.
- The availability of a skilled labor force remains a major problem.

Slide 7 Availability of Skilled Labor

- In fact, business owners and executives have grown increasingly concerned with the skills, availability and work ethic of the labor force over the past year.
- Given the concerns that business has with the skills of the labor force, it is not surprising that business is also concerned about the quality of the public school education in Albuquerque.
- Approximately 80% of businesses surveyed believe that business needs to be involved in education reform.

- Slide 8 Issues Facing the Metro Workforce
- Business in Albuquerque, as well in New Mexico and around the country spend millions of dollars annually to train, retrain and educate employees in basic skills in order to compete in global markets.
- The quality of public school education is perceived to be a problem by approximately two-thirds of local business owners and executives.
- 75% of our business owners express concern with the availability of skilled labor.
- Nearly half view it as a very serious problem.
- Like Albuquerque, many cities around the nation are experiencing similar problems and issues.
- It is definitely a national issue.

Slide 9 Labor Force Issues

- While 75% of the business owners feel there is a serious problem with the availability of skilled labor in the area.
- To further explore this issue, business owners and executives were asked in an unaided, open-ended manner what job skills or qualities are lacking within the local labor pool.
- As shown on the chart, approximately one third say there is a lack of work ethic in the labor pool, while 28 % mention the lack of basic skills and 21% mention deficiencies in technical skills.

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- Other frequently mentioned deficiencies include general education, reading skills and life skills.

Slide 10 Non Professional Labor Force
Overall, business owners are quite critical of the non-professional labor force, as no more than 3% give an excellent rating for any of the attributes listed.

- One third of executives give average ratings to the non-professional labor force for being trainable, though 24% give a positive rating.
- In terms of productivity 16% have a positive impression, while 41% feel the labor force is below average.
- Three fifths of business owners are critical of the non-professional work force's work ethic,
- while 59% give negative ratings for reliability,
- 55% feel the basic skills are below average and
- nearly two-thirds are critical of the non-professional labor force's technical skills.

- Slide 11

So what are we doing about this issue that we have identified?

The major business organizations in our area have come together to work on a unified solution to our education and economic development problem.

Economic and Educational Reform Task Force
Slide 12 Mission
The mission of the *Economic Development and Educational Reform Task Force* will be to review the evidence that supports a standards-based education system, link state and regional economic development goals with current/future workforce and professional skills needs, and identify the key lessons learned from other successful standards-based reform efforts. The Task Force will produce a report that will recommend specific strategies and recommendations to assist the Albuquerque Public Schools towards implementing and sustaining an effective reform effort. Our goal is to influence decisions surrounding public education is such a dramatic and effective way, that Albuquerque becomes a model for other communities around the nation.

(Not on screen)

At this time I would like to introduce three of our task force members who will be addressing Accountability, Standards and Governance as they relate to education reform and economic development.

Larry Willard is Regional President of Wells Fargo Bank and sits on the Board of Directors of the Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce and Albuquerque Economic Development. He will present the concept of Standards.

Maria Raby-Mondragon is the President of Contract Associates, an international business furniture and office interiors design company. She is currently on the Board of Directors of the Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce, Association of Commerce and Industry, and on the Board of Regents for the University of New Mexico. She will address the issue of Accountability.

Mike Stanford is President of First State Bank and serves on the executive committee of the Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce and serves as President of the NM Bankers Association and sits on the New Mexico Workforce Development Board. He will address the issue of Governance.

Larry:
Standards:
Slide13
When a group of high school educators were recently asked what the standards and expectations were for a particular subject area, there were more than four different answers given. In Albuquerque, the local district standards along with the State standards are vague and not clearly defined with both knowledge and performance measures. The common standards that educators use are not tied in any way to industry standards and what employers expect employees to be able to know and do. While we are not suggesting that public education strive to create welders and bricklayers, there are certain areas of knowledge and levels of basic skills that are important for every student to have and should be expected to have before they leave high school. At this time, there seems to be expectations for students that are "college bound" which are higher, and more stringent than those for students that are not.

Slide 14

Our group is working on developing regional industry standards that can be linked to public education in a way to make education more relevant for students and show them the importance of staying in school. It also shares the vision that all students whether college bound or not should be expected to achieve academically to the same standard. This expectation will only serve them in choices they make as they graduate.

Slide 15
Successful educational models around the nation and world show the importance of a Standards-Based Educational system. A successful standards based educational system is one with defined and measurable high academic performance standards. Standards Based Education Systems show not only what a student knows, but also what the student can do with the knowledge he or she possesses. The educational standards must be set high to encourage and require development of the skills necessary for success.

There are several aspects of identifying and communicating standards for a system to be effective. One is that standards must be clearly defined along with the outcomes for students that are meeting the standards. What does the standard look like when it is performed? Educators need to know what to teach and what to look for in assessing a student's ability to perform.

(slide 15 continued)
Standards must be high. Districts should set long term goals for student performance. Schools should set annual performance targets and develop plans to actually reach those targets. District should align funds to achieve desired results.

Slide 16
In our two benchmarking trips, we observed the successful use of standards in both Philadelphia and Scotland.

The performance standards identified in the Philadelphia Public School System are communicated in a way that everyone in the system understands the expectations. The message is clear and empowering; called "Children Achieving" it is a comprehensive plan focusing on new standards which students need to meet in order to compete in the global economy. The message provides a consistent focus on student achievement and sets the tone for the entire district. Everyone knows what to strive for and is on the same page.
Slide 17
In Scotland, the performance standards were both industry and academic. The standards were performance based to show not only what should be taught, but also what it looks like in real-world context. Business and Government both endorse the standards. The government rating system includes standards that are identified by business. If a student receives certification of knowledge and performance, business will accept that certification at face value, unlike our system, which still tests students for placement and does not accept proof of achievement from the school with any confidence. There are shared realistic expectations agreed upon by every stakeholder: parents, educators, business and industry, elected officials and the student. Because there are common standards identified everyone strives for the same end result, but individual schools and teachers have the autonomy to decide how best to achieve them.

Slide 18
In a successful system focused on student achievement, all students must reach benchmarked standards of achievement, no exceptions, and no excuses. The standards must be the same for all students, everyone needs to acquire a deep understanding of core subjects; the capacity to apply that understanding to complex, real world problems.

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Slide 19
Assessment systems, the curriculum, the whole instructional program, the professional development program and the accountability system must be linked to each other and to the standards for student achievement at every level of the educational system.

And now Maria Raby-Mondragon will explain our efforts surrounding Accountability.
Slide 20
Maria:
Accountability

Slide 21
As Larry mentioned, the Standards for education are very vague. But because we have such vaguely defined standards, it is difficult to create an accountability system that holds educators and other stakeholder's feet to the fire.

Accountability is defined as being answerable for one's actions. It is unfair to expect educators, students, parents and other stakeholders to answer for their actions and results, when what is expected isn't clearly defined. True accountability requires both real incentives as well as real consequences linked to achievement of the defined standards.
Slide 22
Our group is working to identify best practices in accountability to help move our schools to a focus of student improvement and achievement. A Standards Based Education System can only work if there is true accountability. Clearly identified goals tied to **incentives** and **sanctions** combined with the authority to utilize resources enable all stakeholders in the educational process to succeed. Accountability includes measuring several benchmarks for students at different times during their educational career to ensure they are reaching the desired level of performance. If the students are not succeeding, "safety nets" must be in place to rectify the situation before the student goes on. Right now, good teachers and bad teachers work along side each other with similar pay scales, students are "socially promoted" to the next grade without proof of academic knowledge and performance and there are no systemic safety nets to help either of these groups.

In the new system we envision accountability will be linked to standards, along with resources and flexibility to address specific needs, while reinforcing the expectation that all students will meet a certain level of achievement.

Slide 23
In the two benchmarking trips, we observed the implementation of two successful accountability systems.

Philadelphia has done a good job creating a system that makes sure every school can succeed and improve while taking into account economic and demographic factors for each school. Schools are measured by how far they have come, not how they compare to other schools. Performance is measured every two years of the initiative and **significant financial** performance-based awards are given to schools meeting their goals. Effective supports are in place for those who don't meet the performance goals. The system is such that the accountability measures require that scores improve **and** that the number of students below the basic performance level reduces every year.
Slide 24
In Scotland, the government reviews each school and determines whether a school is poor, fair, good or very good and provides support and resources to help schools improve. The report provides information on how well a school is doing and recommendations on how to improve. The reports are widely publicized locally and acknowledged by teachers, parents and business as a good determinant of a school's performance. This helps educators know what issues they are being evaluated upon and helps them utilize their resources to meet the expected standards.

Slide 25
Accountability, we feel is where the rubber meets the road in any systemic education reform. Goals and targets can be set for any group, but without resources and accountability measures in place, the goals are not likely to be met. In successful systems consequences are non-threatening, so that schools can truthfully report what levels they are achieving at, and can ask for help from the district to make improvements. Incentives are real and tangible to encourage an effort to meet performance standards. This leads to higher student achievement and a student focused effort on the part of all stakeholders.

And now I would like to introduce Mike Stanford who will address Governance:

Mike:
Slide 26
Governance:

Slide 27
The current system of governance used in most of the United States for our educational system is unheard of in other countries that we compete with economically.
Slide 28
The election of single-issue board members who are accountable to no one for school performance is one of the detriments in creating a standards-based educational system.

Slide 29
New governance strategies need to be in place for the purpose of producing higher levels of student and system performance. School Boards, working with Superintendents must make fundamental changes in policy required to support a results- focused organization. Micro Management must end and boards must take on the harder but more important role of defining expected results. Similarly, state policy makers will have to limit policy making to define desired outcomes and leave the methods up to local educators. To accomplish this, governing bodies must align their programs to be supportive of local implementation.
Slide 30
In our two benchmarking trips, we observed significant differences in the governance systems, which helped to drive the reform.

A significant change from our local system is the Scottish governance system with reviews and reports. Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) (the federal government) conducts reviews of each school. There is no school board in the sense that we recognize one, the local City Council acts as the school board and manages the school capital infrastructure only. Each school has a Board of Trustees which acts in an advisory capacity to support the school leadership in determining how best to meet learning objectives. The government (HMI) reviews each school and determines whether a school is poor, fair, good or very good and provides support and resources to help schools improve. The report provides information on how well a school is doing and recommendations on how to improve.
Slide 31
The governance of the schools is also different in Philadelphia. The Mayor appoints all School Board members, thereby causing the "buck to stop" at the Mayor for accountability. While some school board members represent regions others are appointed at large to keep focus on the entire district's goals and keep the regions from competing against each other. Because the school board member terms expire with the Mayor's term, there is no lame duck issue to contend with and the buck can really stop with the Mayor and his or her education staff.

Slide 32
While we understand that school boards have actually been eliminated in Kentucky, we have a trip in late February to visit their schools and learn about their governance systems. We are not opposed to such dramatic change, as we are working for dramatic change in the entire educational system.

Slide 33
Good governance is key to the success of educational reform, making student achievement the focus for everything the district does.

We feel that by dramatically changing the ways schools are governed, with standards and accountability measures in place across the system, we can affect positive change in our public education system.

Slide 34
Terri:

- As you can see we have a lot of work to do, and every second counts as we move ahead.

- Our efforts will affect every stakeholder involved with public education.

Slide 35
- Students will see a relevance and importance to the subjects they are learning.
- They will be able to control their destiny more as all subjects meet high standards.
- Educators will have clearly defined outcomes and expectations, that they will have the resources to obtain, and will be held accountable for reaching.
- Accountability will include both sanctions or help for those not meeting goals and incentives for those that do meet goal.
- How the system is governed has such a major impact on the success for these changes, we envision significant changes in that area as well.
- Our efforts will positively affect the drop out rates we are currently experiencing,
- but more so, will create a system that ensures all students who do graduate have the knowledge and skills necessary to go on to college or the workplace and be successful.

(End of power point)
I would now like to open the floor to the others in our group who may wish to add to the points made here today:
Thank you.
Rick Alvidrez, will now close our remarks this afternoon. Rick....
Congressional Comments and Questions...

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PRESENTATION

to the

Congressional Education Committee

GREATER ALBUQUERQUE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Monday, January 24, 2000

OVERVIEW

- No nation can succeed in providing full employment at high wages if it fails to educate and train all of its citizens to high standards.
- Clear standards ensure that everyone has the necessary academic and technical knowledge and skills to succeed in a global economy.
- As representatives of business, we are concerned with the economic vitality of our community and the success of the businesses here.

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GOALS

- For the past several years, the Chamber has been working with educators, administrators, and business organizations throughout the region to find solutions to problems in our education system.
- We have come to an understanding that if significant change is to happen, it will not happen by just adding another program. Instead, we must have a unified focus and clear goals to guide us.
- Quality education is an essential ingredient to our economic development and vitality and directly affects our quality of life.

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ISSUES

- This is particularly important since our public schools provide educational opportunities for a very culturally and economically diverse population.
- In Albuquerque, 17% of children ages 5 to 17 live below the poverty level. Currently, more than 2500 students drop out of APS/Highschools each year.
- These startling numbers have a domino effect when students enter into higher education.
- At TV-I and UNM, professors are faced with the task of remediation.
- At TV-I alone, 30% of all students are in remedial classes, while 60% of freshmen take remedial classes.
- At UNM, 50% of freshmen drop out.

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But the DOMINO AFFECT...

does not stop there. It continues to spill over into the business sector. Employers are faced with the daunting task of continual work force training. As employers put more and more resources into training employees, they are faced with not only budgetary issues, but also time on the job lost to training.

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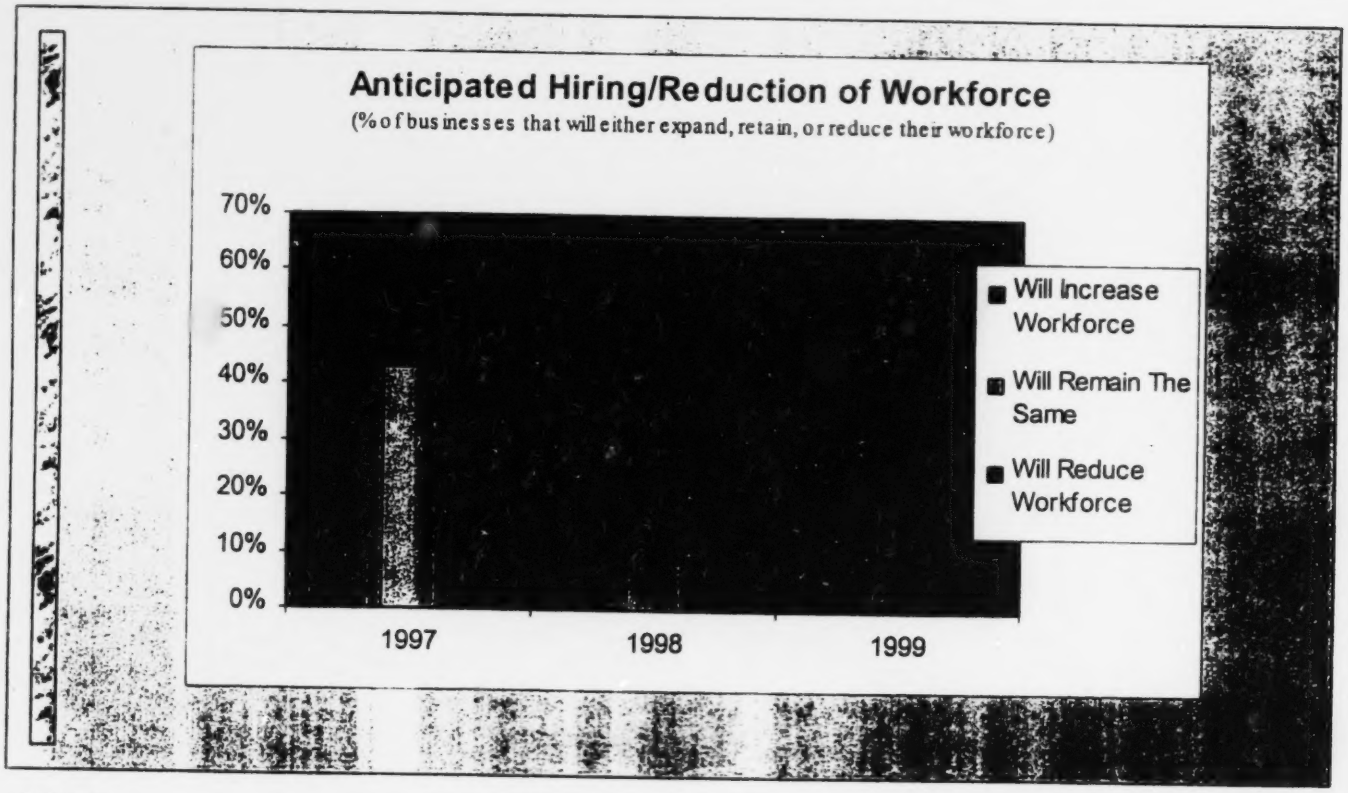
Anticipated Hiring/Reduction of Workforce

(% of businesses that will either expand, retain, or reduce their workforce)



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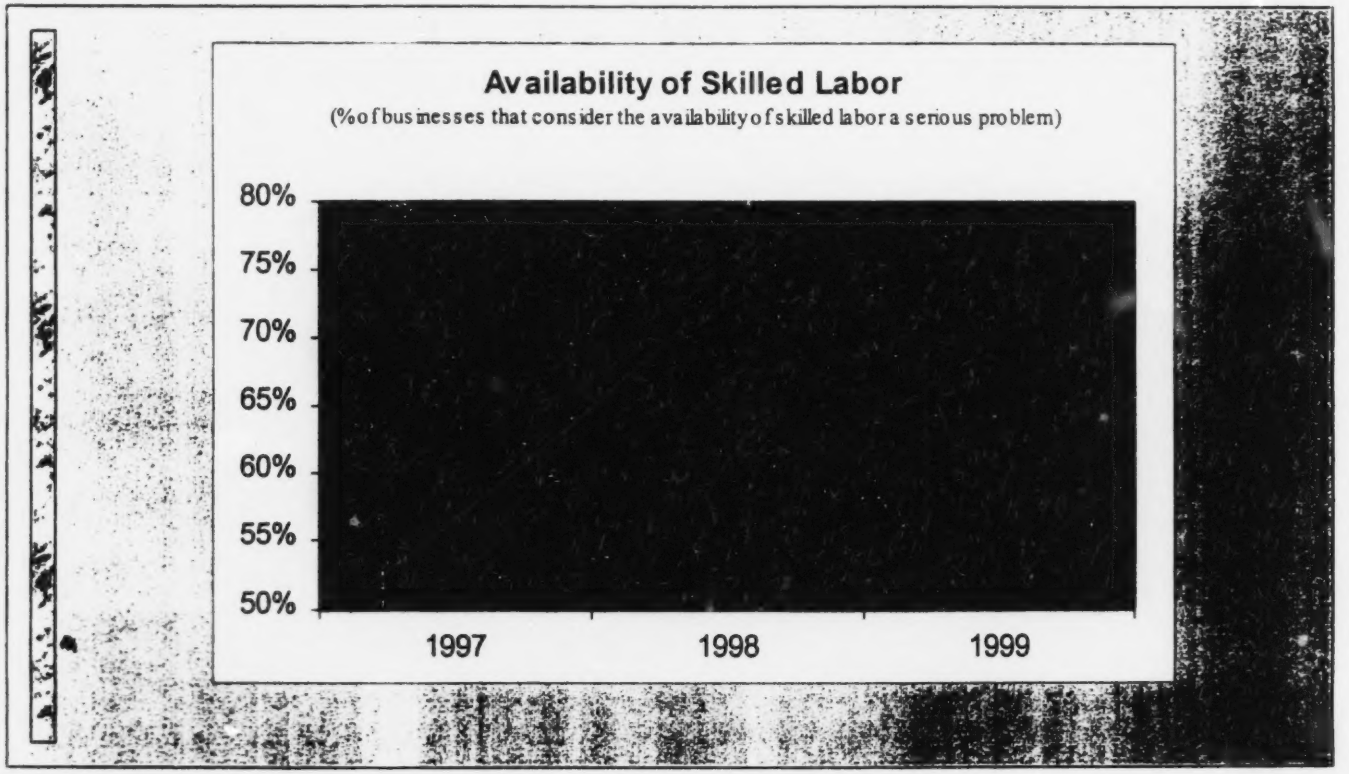
Availability of Skilled Labor

(% of businesses that consider the availability of skilled labor a serious problem)



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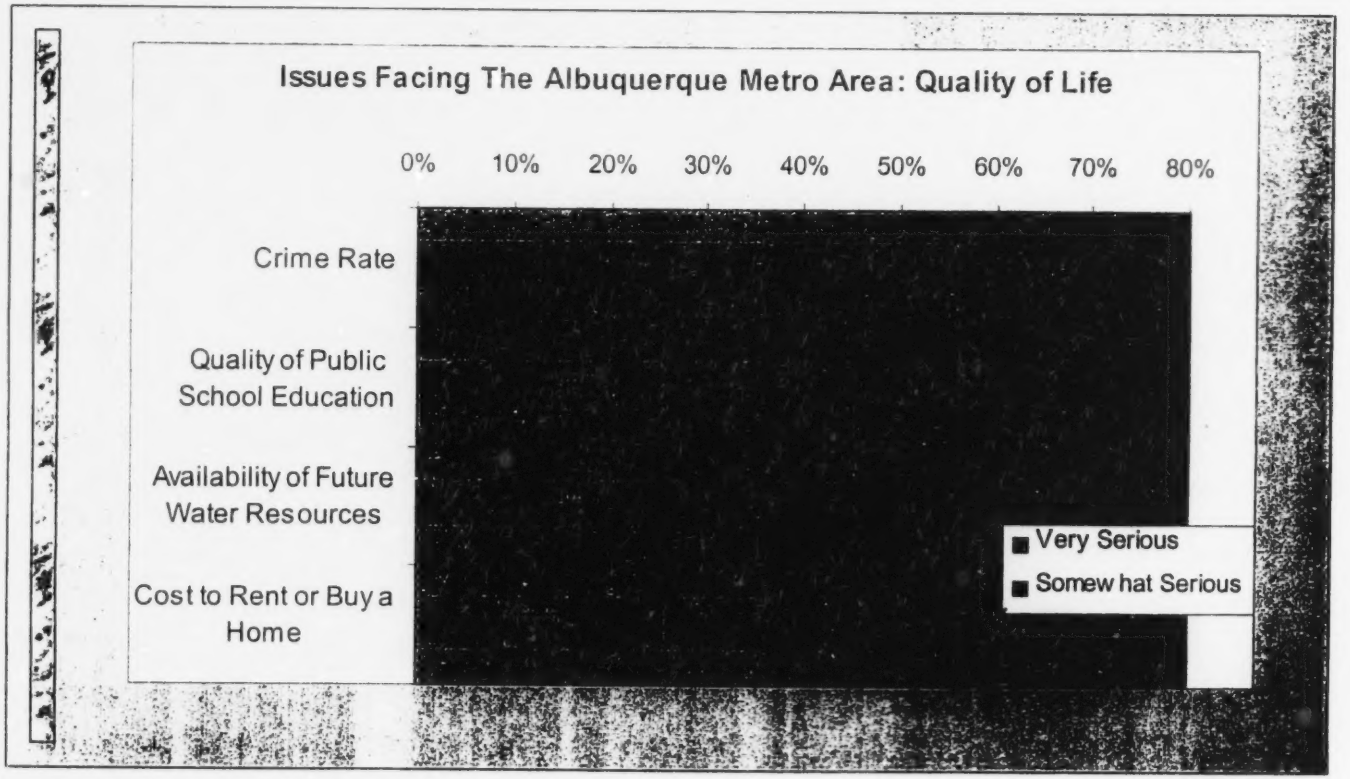
Issues Facing the Albuq. Metro Area: Quality of Life



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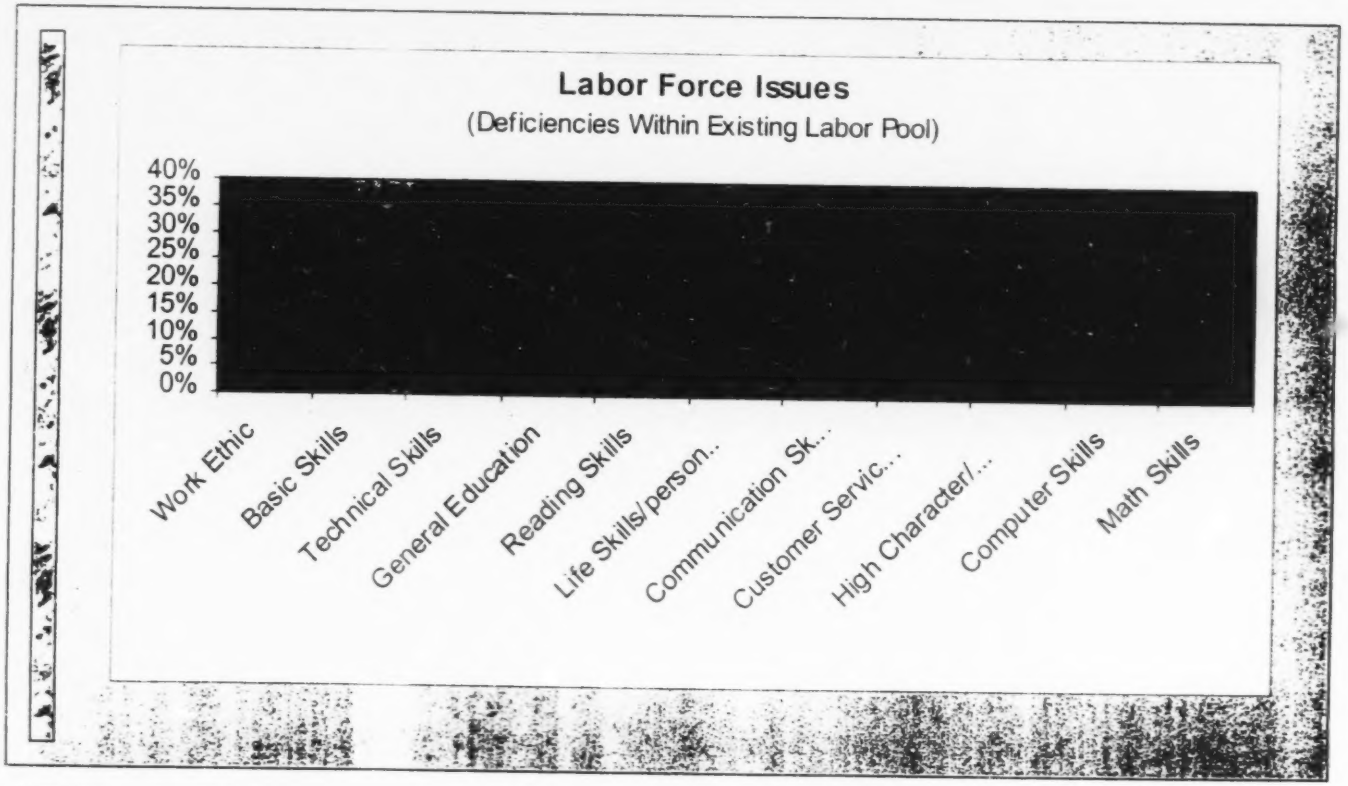
Labor Force Issues



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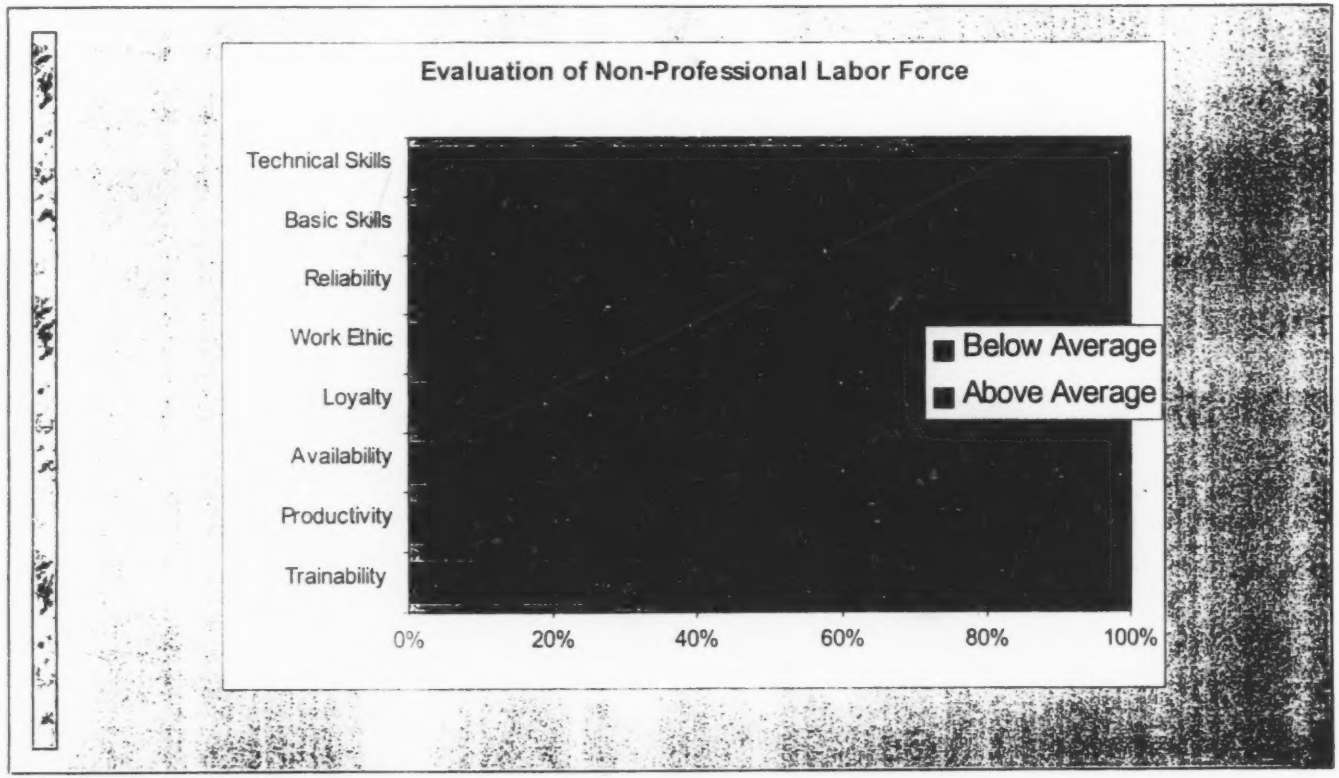
Evaluation of Non-Professional Labor Force



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What are we doing?

- Major Business organizations have united to find a solution to the education and economic development problem.

- "Economic Development and Educational Reform Task Force"

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Mission of the Task Force:

- To review the evidence that supports a standards-based education system, link state and regional economic development goals with current/future workforce and professional skills needs, and identify the key lessons learned from other successful standards-based reform efforts.

- To produce a report that will recommend specific strategies and recommendations to assist the Albuquerque Public Schools towards implementing and sustaining an effective reform effort.

- To influence decisions surrounding public education in such a dramatic and effective way, that Albuquerque becomes a model for other communities around the nation.

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Standards:

- Certain areas of knowledge and levels of basic skills that are important for every student to have before leaving high school.
- Local educators are unclear about what the actual standards are that they should be striving for.

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Developing regional industry standards:

- Linked to public education
- Making education more relevant
- Same expectation for students regardless of their post high school plans

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Successful Standards Based Systems:

- Clearly defined
- Measurable
- Set high
- Academic and Performance Based
- Clearly and consistently communicated to stakeholders

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Benchmarking Trip to Philadelphia:

- "Children Achieving"
- Clearly communicated
- Comprehensive
- Consistently communicated
- Measured every two years

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Benchmarking trip to Scotland:

- Standards are both industry and academic based.
- Performance based to show what it looks like in a real-world context.
- Certification is accepted at face value.
- Shared realistic expectations by every stakeholder: parents, educators, students, business, industry, and government

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Vision:

- A system focused on student achievement.
- All students expected to reach the same benchmarked standards of achievement.
  - No excuses
  - No exceptions

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Accountability System:

All linked to the standards at every level.

- Assessment Systems
- Curriculum
- Instructional Programs
- Professional Development

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Accountability

Standards for Education are Vague:

- It is difficult to create an accountability system that holds stakeholders to the task.
- Accountability: Being answerable for one's actions.
- Without clearly defined standard, accountability cannot happen.
- True accountability: Real incentives AND real consequences lined to achievement.

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VIABLE SOLUTIONS

- Task force is working to identify best practices in accountability
  - To help move our schools to a focus of student improvement and achievement
- Goals tied to Incentives and Sanctions
  - Linked to resources and authority
- Accountability is measurable
  - Benchmarks for students throughout the year to follow trend towards goal
- Safety nets for students not meeting the standards

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Benchmarking trip to Philadelphia:

- Schools measured against themselves: how much have they improved?
- Performance measured every two years
- Significant Financial Performance Based Awards given to schools meeting their goals
- Effective supports placed for those not meeting their goals.

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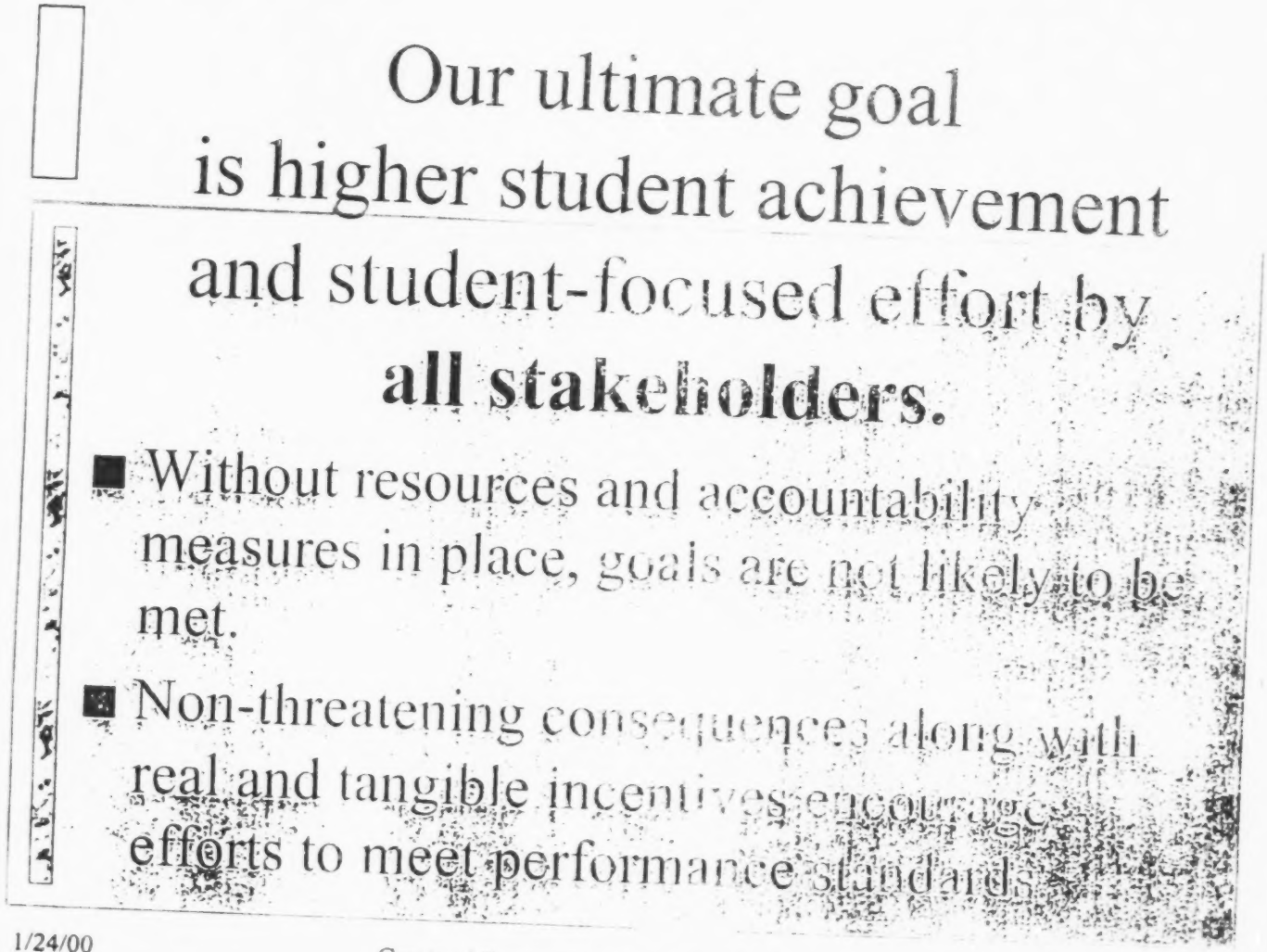
Benchmarking trip to Scotland:

- Government review of each school
- Reports provide information on performance status and recommendations for improvement
- Reports widely publicized
- Clearly define what is expected


Our ultimate goal
is higher student achievement
and student-focused effort by
all stakeholders.
Without resources and accountability measures in place, goals are not likely to be met.
Non-threatening consequences along with real and tangible incentives encourage efforts to meet performance standards.
1/24/00
Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce
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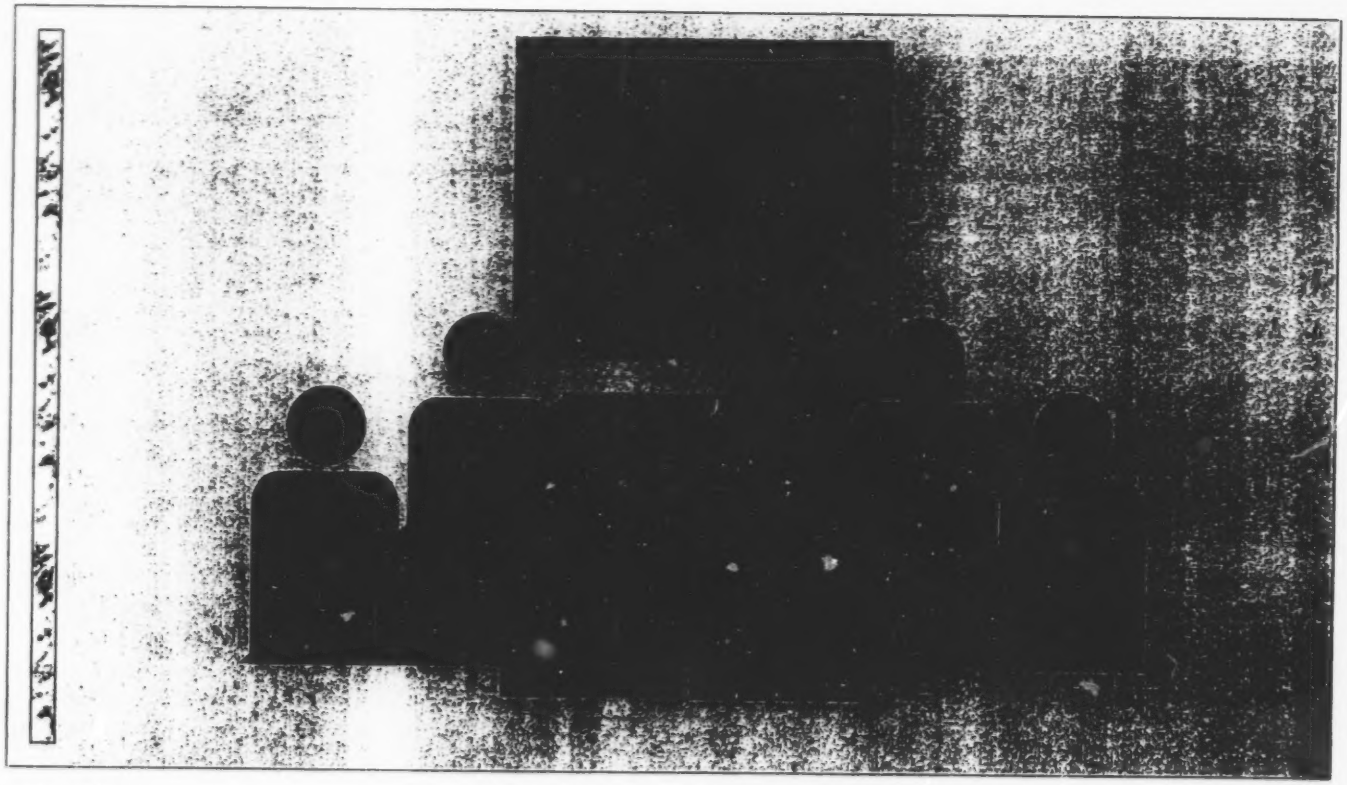
Governance



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UNITED STATES SYTEM

US system of Education Governance in unlike that in any other country

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Problem:

- Single issue board members
- Board members accountable to no one

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Solution:

- New governance strategies
- Focus on Student and System performance
- End Board Micro Management
- Boards focusing on defining expected results
- States limit policy to defining desired outcomes

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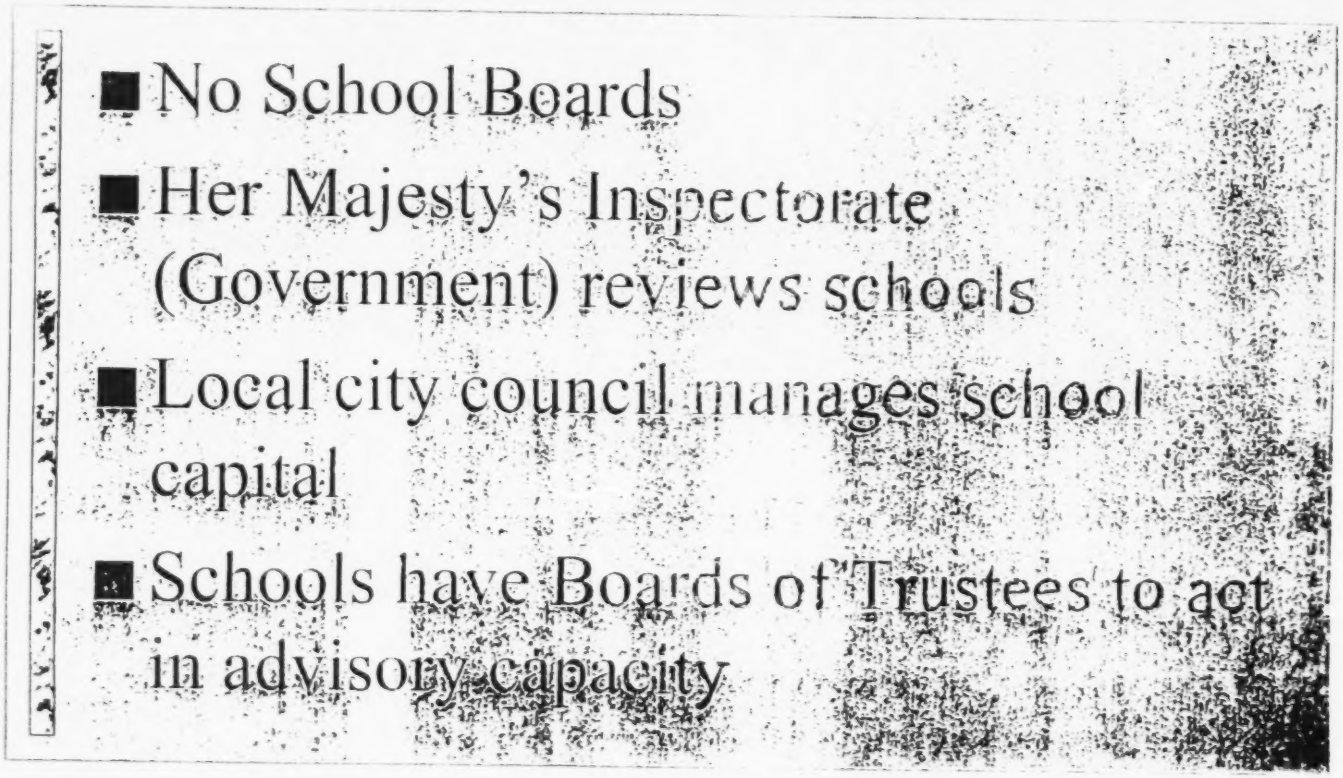
Benchmarking Trip to Scotland:


No School Boards
Her Majesty's Inspectorate (Government) reviews schools
Local city council manages school capital
Schools have Boards of Trustees to act in advisory capacity

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Benchmarking Trip to Philadelphia:

- Mayor appoints all school board members who serve during the Mayor's term
- Some represent regions while others serve at large
- Buck Stops with the Mayor

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Benchmarking Trip to Kentucky:

- We are already aware that Kentucky has eliminated school boards
- We have a trip planned for:
  - February 27 - March 1, 2000

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Good Governance is key to the success of educational reform.

We want dramatic change and are willing to recommend dramatic shifts in the way schools are run.

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Education Reform *is a Major Undertaking*

Every stakeholder should be affected

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END RESULT:

- Students see relevance and have more control of their education.
- Educators have clearly defined outcomes, expectations along with resources and will be held accountable.
- Parents will know and understand what is expected of their students and themselves.
- Business will identify standards and support those meeting the standard.
- Accountability tied to standards with incentives and sanctions.
- Changed Governance System
- Fewer drop-outs from the system.

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